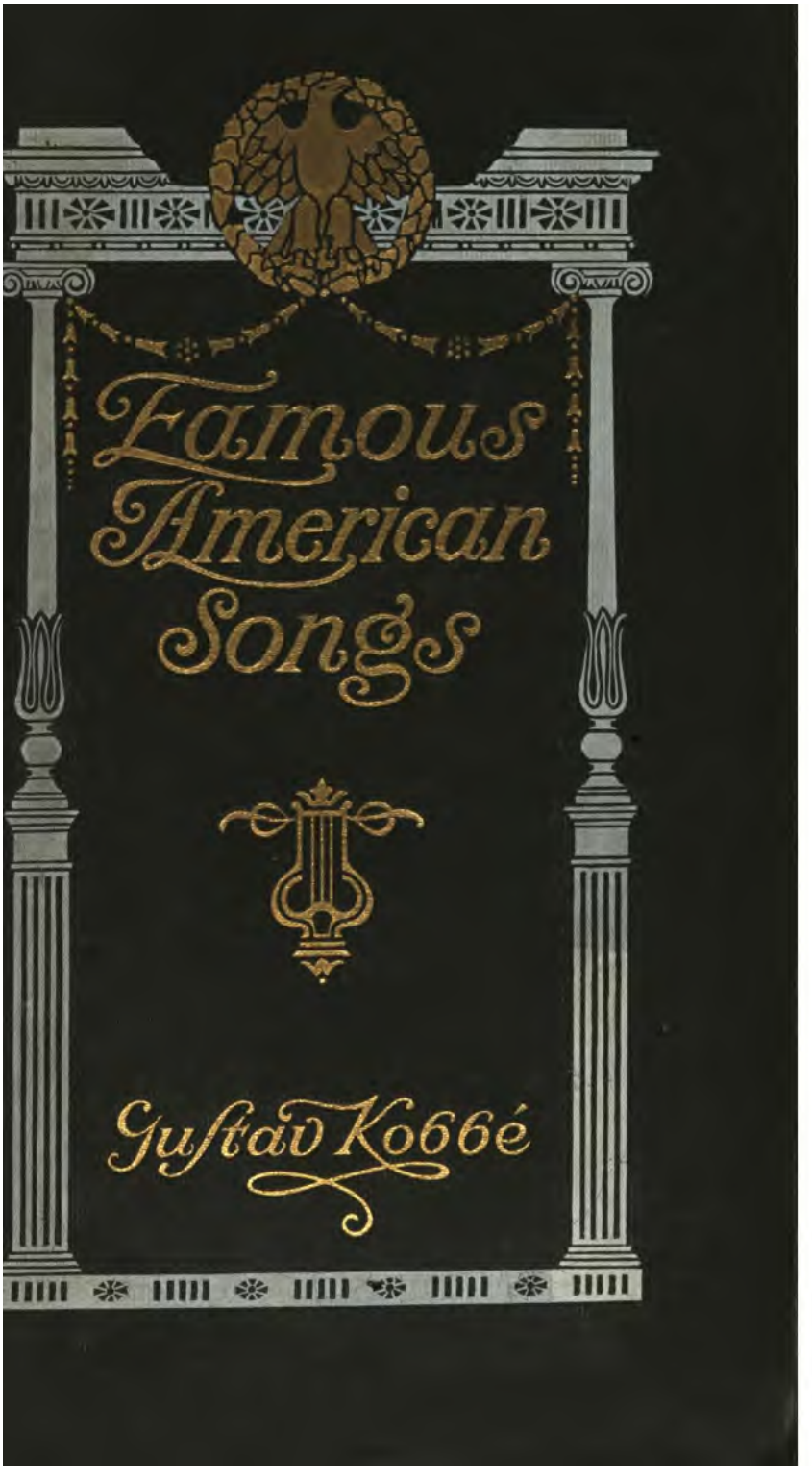
Famous
American
Songs
Gustav Kobbé


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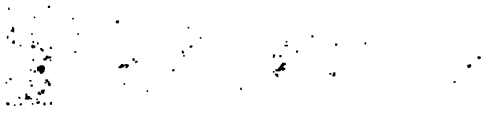

Famous American Songs

By Gustav Kobbé

Author of The Loves of Great Composers

Thomas Y. Crowell & Co.
New York

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To my Sister
Isabella M. Kobbé

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Introduction

 ANY are the songs that are popular—for a while. Every spring the music publishers are on the lookout for the song-hit of the coming summer. But apparently it is destined to live only through that summer, if that long. It disappears as completely as if it had never been written. Another and another takes its place. They are fleeting fancies which, for a while, tickle the ear without reaching the heart of the people.

To sink deep into the affections of a nation, to be caught up eagerly not only by those who first hear it, but also by those who come after, and thus to be handed down as part of the popular inheritance, a song must appeal in a direct, simple and spontaneous way to some sentiment that is common to all humanity,—love of

home, of mother, of country. That is one universal characteristic of the songs which live on from generation to generation. And there is another. It is their freedom from immoral suggestion. The "common people," as we are pleased to call them, reject with one accord whatever is coarse or impure. The "topical song" of to-day, with its suggestive lines, will be forgotten to-morrow, because the "common people" decline to give it vogue. The words of our folk-songs may be commonplace, but otherwise they are wholly unobjectionable; and the melody of a popular song that lives, though simple, never is trivial.

This attitude on the part of the people goes far to explain the seemingly singular fact that comparatively few popular songs, which have survived, celebrate the love affairs of young men and women. There seems a reluctance to accept such songs permanently, as if there were something immodest in

proclaiming sentiments that should be whispered in the ear of only one person. The folk-songs that have gained the strongest hold are those which voice a vague regret for something once dear and still fondly remembered.

Judging by comparative popularity, I should say that the sentiment most deeply implanted in the human heart is love of home. In times of great excitement, especially when war is imminent or in progress, this sentiment may be replaced by patriotism. But the old home feeling returns sooner or later. Probably the most widely known song wherever the English tongue is spoken is "Home, Sweet Home;" while "Old Folks at Home" is a close second. That these songs strike a chord common to humanity is shown by the further fact that they are sung on the Continent also. Stephen Collins Foster's touching little "plantation melody" has been adapted even to several Asiatic tongues. Some of the greatest sing-

ers have not disdained to include these songs in their repertories. Jenny Lind sang "Home, Sweet Home;" I often have heard Patti sing it; and I well remember how charmingly Christine Nilsson sang "Old Folks at Home." Excepting one or two Scotch tunes which have the characteristic "Scotch snap" (an accentuation that admits of some fascinating by-play on the singer's part), I do not know of any popular songs that have been similarly honored.

A curious and highly interesting difference may be discovered between the origin of the folk-songs of old countries and the popular songs of our own land. Most of the foreign songs seem to have sprung up from the people; many of them are very old, and their composers are unknown. They "just growed;" and, indeed, the whole idea of a folk-song seems to preclude anything like formality in its origin. Yet the majority of American popular songs were deliberately composed,

copyrighted and published, and as if to make even a single exception to this rule impossible, it happens that the melody to which "Home, Sweet Home" afterwards was set, was published under copyright protection in England early in the last century. Nevertheless there is nothing formal about the sound or effect of these American songs. Their appeal to the popular heart was immediate, and they travelled across seas, as if by "wireless," years before Marconi was born. To-day the American "coon" or "ragtime" song, however ephemeral, is heard in England and on the Continent almost as soon as here. What Europe has sent us by way of exchange in popular songs during all these years is almost nil.

Another characteristic, and perhaps the most singular one, of American popular songs is that most of them have been written for the stage. "Home, Sweet Home" was heard first on the

stage of the Covent Garden Theatre, London. "Old Folks at Home," and in fact most of the other songs by Stephen Collins Foster, was written for the Christy minstrels. "Dixie" was originally a walk-around for Dan Bryant's minstrel troupe; and so the story continues to the present day, our popular songs still being written and composed with an eye and an ear for stage production. These are the so-called "interpolated" songs of comic opera. Indeed the function of the average comic opera composer seems reduced to supplying a background of choruses, duets and finales. The manager then arranges with some popular song writers and composers for two or three numbers, which are counted on to make the "hits" of the piece. Whether any of these will retain their vogue long enough to become what I may call standard popular songs—be permanently assured of a place in the hearts of the people—still remains to be seen.

Home, Sweet Home

I

"Home, Sweet Home"

The world has literally sung my song until every heart is familiar with its melody, yet I have been a wanderer since my boyhood: John Howard Payne

ON the evening of May 8, 1823, at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, London, Miss Maria Tree, a sister of the famous actress, Ellen Tree, gave voice to a song which thrilled the audience and since has reëchoed in every heart in the English-speaking world as the song that better than any other expresses the sentiment of "home." The occasion was the first performance of "Clari, the Maid of Milan," a play by John Howard Payne, with musical numbers by Henry Rowley Bishop, and the song was "Home, Sweet Home." It was characteristic of the "homeless bard of home," that he was living in Paris, that his song was heard first in London, while the home he sang of was

a little cottage in Easthampton, Long Island, in which he had not set foot since boyhood. It also was characteristic of his fate that although "Home, Sweet Home" won a wealthy husband for the singer, and earned a small fortune for the theatre and the publisher, it left Payne little or no better off than he had been before. The song had that valuable theatrical quality professionally known as "thrills," but these did not extend to the author's pocketbook. He had sold "Clari" for a lump sum, had no interest in the publishing rights; while as to fame—the publisher did not even think it worth while to put Payne's name on the title-page!

It is said sometimes that Bishop's melody, not Payne's words, has given "Home, Sweet Home" its vogue. That argument can easily be disposed of. The melody was not new. Bishop had used it several years before as a "Sicilian air" in a book of "Melodies of Various Nations," where he had set it

JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

to words by Thomas Haynes Bayly, beginning "To the home of my childhood in sorrow I came." This was a "home" song; a leading London publishing house, Goulding, D'Almaine, Potter & Co., brought out the book under the distinguished patronage of H. R. H. The Duchess of Gloucester, the Princess Sophia, and others; but the melody then failed to carry the song into every heart which it did when set to Payne's words. For every person who has heard of "To the Home of my Childhood" a million know "Home, Sweet Home." But for Payne's lines the tune would have been forgotten long ago. Together they make a simple, direct appeal to one of the most universal sentiments in the human breast. Each needs the other. They go hand in hand, words and music, —the song and the soul of the song. Therefore, why endeavor to draw fine distinctions between the respective merits of Payne's lyric and

Bishop's air? In happy union they have survived the vicissitudes of more than seventy-five years. They seem destined for immortality. Whole libraries of intellectual volumes have been forgotten, tons of vocal scores have been sold for waste paper. The same process of elimination will continue, leaving one book, one score out of thousands to survive. But a simple little poem by a homesick American and set to music by a second-rate English composer, lives on, because, forsooth, the author let us know that he was homesick by describing that longing which every one of us has experienced at some moment in his life. After all, the literature which attracts us most is that in which we ourselves are reproduced, just as in a picture gallery in which our own portrait is hung we look for that first. Because the words of "Home, Sweet Home" echo, and its music reëchoes, a sentiment that is at once touching and universal, words

and music united form that rare thing, the popular song that survives. After the elect have settled upon the great names in literature and music, the lowly reach out for their own.

To the general public John Howard Payne is known only through his famous poem. There may be a vague impression that his life was one of many vicissitudes; that his fortunes often were at a low ebb; that the poet who sang so tenderly of home was for many years an exile; that he died in a foreign land; and that, even after death, his wandering did not cease, his remains having been transferred many years later from what was to have been his last resting-place to a grave in his native land. But how many people are aware that for many years, and despite his ups-and-downs, Payne was a prominent figure on the stage both as actor and playwright, and the first American to make a reputation abroad in either capacity? He was the author

of the tragedy of "Brutus," which Edmund Kean produced in London with great success, which was a favorite piece with Edwin Forrest, and which, remodelled, might even to-day be taken into a tragedian's repertory—if there is a tragedian. The last person I saw act it was the late John McCullough. All told, Payne wrote and adapted about fifty pieces for the stage and he was the author of other poems besides "Home, Sweet Home." As an actor he was the first youthful prodigy this country produced,—"the young American Roscius,"—and one of the sad features of his career was that "Mr." Payne could not sustain the reputation made by "Master" Payne.

The Paynes are of old American stock. John Howard Payne's direct ancestors were among the earliest settlers at Eastham, Massachusetts, where the name appears as far back as 1622. Robert Treat Paine, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, in spite

of the slight difference in the spelling of his name, belonged to the same family. William Payne, the poet's father, was a tutor in several wealthy Boston families. He married twice. His first wife, who died soon after marriage, was a Miss Lucy Taylor, whom he met at Barnstable. Then he married Sarah Isaacs, whose father was a convert from the Jewish faith and who resided in Easthampton, New York. There the elder Payne settled and was made principal of Clinton Academy, erected by Governor DeWitt Clinton. John Howard Payne was born of this second marriage on June 9, 1791, in New York; but the greater part of his early childhood was spent in the picturesque Long Island town, which made an indelible impression on his memory. The house in which the Paynes lived and which the poet immortalized in "Home, Sweet Home" still stands.

William Payne was an admirable elocutionist, and this gift, descending

to the son, took the turn of a passion for the stage. This passion became so manifest that his parents in alarm sent him to New York to clerk it, hoping that this prosaic occupation would crush his theatrical ambition. But this would not down. He spent all the money he could spare on the theatre and also started a dramatic paper, "The Thespian Mirror." He was then but fourteen years old, yet the articles in the "Mirror" were so ably written that they attracted much attention and the "Evening Post" announced that it would reprint one of them. This alarmed Payne, who feared that it might result in his family's discovering what he was doing. Accordingly, he called on the editor of the "Post," William Coleman, who was amazed to find in the author of the article which had struck him so forcibly a mere boy. Payne was a handsome lad; and his talents, combined with the agreeable personal impression he had made, in-

duced Mr. Coleman to interest himself in raising a fund, to which a Mr. Seaman, another warm admirer, contributed liberally, with the object of sending him to Union College, Schenectady, New York. He was taken there by Charles Brockden Brown, the novelist. His literary aspirations led him to start a college paper called "The Pastime," which became popular with the students, and he was a mainstay in college theatricals, playing among other parts the female rôle of Lodoiska in "Pulaski."

To go on the stage still was his dominant ambition, and events so shaped themselves that it was gratified. His mother died, and financial misfortune overtook his father. A stage début, if successful, seemed to offer the quickest means of the youth's becoming self-supporting, and William Payne withdrew his opposition. February 24, 1809, before he was seventeen years old, John Howard Payne made his first

appearance in public at the Park Theatre, New York, as Young Norval in Holmes's "Douglas." The character of the young Highlander, "who fed his flocks upon the Grampian Hill," was popular in those days, and even twenty years later Forrest selected it for his début. Payne's handsome locks, his lithe, agile figure, his mobile features, and his spontaneity made the event an immense success. On March 14, when he appeared as Hamlet, the house held fourteen hundred dollars. He played with similar success in Boston and Baltimore, where at his benefit seats sold as high as fifty dollars.

In January, 1813, Payne sailed from New York to try his fortune on the English stage. The passage occupied twenty-two days. War was pending between the United States and England; and when the ship arrived at Liverpool, Payne was jailed for a fortnight before being allowed to proceed to London. Through Benjamin West,

President of the Royal Academy, he secured an engagement at Drury Lane, where, June 4, 1813, Young Norval was played "by a Young Gentleman (being his first appearance in London)." The young gentleman was Payne. He scored a success. Later he played Romeo, with James W. Wallack (afterwards the founder of Wallack's Theatre, New York, and the father of Lester Wallack) as the Prince. At Birmingham, Elliston, the theatrical manager, played an amusing trick on Payne. Elliston's company was announced to appear in "Richard III." The manager was anxious that Payne should play the title rôle, but the young American declined. Elliston then asked Payne, on the plea of being very busy, to oblige him by taking charge of the rehearsal for a day, and persuaded him to this. Payne rehearsed the company long and arduously. He looked in vain for Elliston, who failed to put in an appearance at the theatre. But imagine

the young actor's surprise, after dismissing the rehearsal and going out on the street, to find the city placarded with announcements of the performance, stating that Richard would be played by "the celebrated American Roscius, Mr. Howard Payne"! Of course there was nothing left for the "celebrated American Roscius" to do but to submit and become the amused victim of Elliston's clever ruse.

All told, Payne's career as an actor in England lasted five years out of the nineteen which elapsed before he returned to America. His last appearances were as Young Norval and Hamlet in Birmingham in May, 1818. When he retired he had played in England one hundred and six nights and acted twenty-two characters. But, as has been the unhappy experience of so many juvenile prodigies, he had lost that lack of self-consciousness and the attractive spontaneity which are the great charms of the youthful actor. He

had ceased to be a "Roscius."

During his theatrical career in England he had formed a large circle of friends both on and off the stage. He knew most of the leading English actors and actresses of note and many literary people. Talma, the most famous French actor of his day, had been so attracted to him that, when he came to Paris, he secured for him the freedom of the Théâtre Français. Among his friends in London were Coleridge, Shelley and Lamb, and, above all, Washington Irving. Indeed a strong intimacy sprang up between Irving and Payne. The future author of "The Sketch-book" and the actor and playwright, who was to be remembered not by what he considered his great productions, but by one short poem, had a "Box and Cox" arrangement between London and Paris. Engaging lodgings in both cities they exchanged them as circumstances required, Payne removing to the Paris rooms when Irving

came to London, and vice versa. It is interesting to note that at this time Irving, whose work is in no wise associated with the theatre, was coquetting with the stage. When Payne found it necessary to give up acting, his dominant dramatic impulse led him to become a playwright. In Paris Irving would note the French successes and let his friend know of them or forward MSS. and printed copies to London, where Payne would adapt them. There is in the possession of Payne's collateral descendants a large batch of unpublished letters from Irving in one of which he mentions a play he has written, asking Payne to submit it to one of his managerial friends, but to conceal the authorship. This was indeed so effectually concealed that, if the play ever was produced, the fact is not known. Aspirations as a playwright certainly reveal Irving in a new light.

Payne's first work for the stage was an adaptation entitled "The Maid and

the Magpie," for which he received one hundred and fifty pounds from the Covent Garden management. His next adaptation, "Accusation," was produced at Drury Lane, with James W. Wallack in the leading rôle. So exact were the scene plots indicated by Payne and so detailed his hints regarding the stage "business" that the rehearsals occupied only ten days. His "Brutus" was produced by Edmund Kean at Drury Lane, December 3, 1818. It was staged by Payne himself and with scenery, properties and costumes designed by him. After running twenty-three nights it had to give way to another piece which had been contracted for, but afterwards ran for fifty-three additional performances, seventy-six in all,—a long run in those days. Payne had intended to act the rôle of Titus himself, but this was vetoed by the management on the curious ground that an actor should not appear in his own play,—a theory which surely did not obtain in Shake-

speare's day, and which, if in force now, would have prevented our seeing William Gillette in "Secret Service" or "Sherlock Holmes."

Payne's was not the first play with Brutus for the title rôle and he was accused of plagiarism, although he had taken care to give credit to several authors for suggestions which he had utilized, quite an unusual instance of honesty on the part of a writer for the stage. His friend Irving promptly came to his defence. "Why," wrote Irving, "Payne has given credit for his play to six authors from whom he has taken hints; but because he has included a seventh, from whom he has borrowed nothing, they have raised against him a hue and cry for plagiarism."

An attempt at management on Payne's part, for which he engaged the Sadler's-Wells Theatre, followed. He was not a business man, and his brief experience as a manager landed

him in the debtors' jail. There he received by chance from Paris a couple of plays. In one of these, "Therese, the Orphan of Geneva," he saw such great opportunities that in three days he had made an adaptation of it and sent it to Drury Lane, where it was rushed on the stage in less than a fortnight, Payne, in disguise, attending some of the rehearsals and the first night. James W. Wallack and the beautiful Miss Kelley took the leading parts.

The success of "Therese" enabled Payne to pay his debts and get out of jail, and also led the rival management at Covent Garden to send him to Paris to watch for theatrical successes and make rapid adaptations of them. In October, 1822, he wrote from Paris to Henry Rowley Bishop, who was composing the music for Covent Garden pieces, stating that he would make three adaptations, "Ali Pacha," "The Two Galley Slaves" and "Clari," for

two hundred and fifty pounds. This is the first mention of "Clari," one song in which was to make him famous. "Clari" really was more than an adaptation. In its original form it was merely a ballet, from which Payne could not have derived more than the plot. In turning it into a play with songs and choruses (it was announced at Covent Garden as an "opera"), Payne wrote original dialogue and verses. Clari, the heroine, elopes with a duke, but is led to return to her parents by hearing a company of strolling players sing one of her native songs, which in Payne's version is "Home, Sweet Home."

The poem as originally written is neither as simple nor as affecting as it became in "Clari." It seems to me that the original form of a lyric that is perhaps more widely known than any other in the English language is well worth giving. Here it is:

'Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home!

A charm from the sky seems to hallow us there,
(Like the love of a mother,
Surpassing all other,)
Even stronger than time, and more deep with despair.

An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain!
O, give me my lowly thatched cottage again!
The birds and the lambkins that came at my call, —
Those who named me with pride, —
Those who played by my side, —
Give me them! with the innocence dearer than all!
The joys of the palaces through which I roam
Only swell my heart's anguish. — There's no place
like Home!

It will be seen that "Home, Sweet Home" became what it is, not by elaboration, but by elimination. The original lacked the familiar refrain, and while it contains many of the essentials of the poem as we know it now, does not make nearly so direct and strong an appeal as the shorter and much simplified version which, fortunately for himself and for us, Payne saw fit to make when he incorporated it in "Clari."

The "Home, Sweet Home" which became famous in a night, which has reëchoed since in millions of hearts,

and with which great singers like Jenny Lind and Patti have not disdained to move their audiences, I am able through the courtesy of the poet's grandnephew, Thatcher T. Payne Luquer, to give in John Howard Payne's own handwriting. The poem is as follows:

'Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like Home!
A charm from the sky seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek through the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere!

Home, home! sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home!
There's no place like Home!

An exile from Home, splendour dazzles in vain!—
Oh, give me my lowly thatch'd cottage again!—
The birds singing gaily that came at my call—
Give me them!— and the peace of mind dearer than all!

Home, home! sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home!
There's no place like Home!

Whether the melody really is a Sicilian air or original with Bishop is a point which would require too much space to discuss here. I am inclined to believe it was original. There is a

story that when Bishop was completing the "Melodies of Various Nations" the publishers asked him to include a Sicilian air, and having none at hand, he composed the melody himself. This may well be true. No popular Sicilian air resembling it can be traced, and when Donizetti wanted a typical English air for his "Anna Bolena" he selected "Home, Sweet Home." It hardly is credible that an Italian composer would not have recognized a popular song of his own country.

The anecdote that Payne heard an Italian peasant girl singing the melody, jotted it down and sent it to Bishop, is a fabrication, based in part, it would appear, on a misquoted passage from one of Payne's letters. Whatever may be said pro or con, the fact remains that the air to which "Home, Sweet Home" is sung appeared, long before "Clari" was written and probably before Payne and Bishop even were acquainted, in Bishop's "Melo-

dies of Various Nations." Most likely when the composer read over "Clari," he perceived the adaptability of the air to the poem, and used it. Another bit of fiction regarding Payne is that he was living in a Paris garret when he wrote "Home, Sweet Home." In point of fact he was busily engaged making adaptations, for which he received more than very fair prices for those days and he had comfortable lodgings. In fact, like many persons of artistic temperament, Payne did not know how to keep money and was apt to live somewhat better than he could afford.

Homesick, however, he was; and when he wrote his poem, he penned it from the depths of a longing heart. For about the time he was engaged on "Clari" he expressed his yearnings in a letter to his brother Thatcher:

"My yearnings toward Home," he wrote, "become stronger as the term of my exile lengthens. I long to see all

your faces and hear all your voices. 'T would do me good to be scolded by Lucy, and see Anna look pretty and simple and sentimental....

"I feel the want of some of you—parts of myself—in this strange world—for though I am naturalized to vagabondium, still it is but vagabondism. I long for a Home about me."

After the success of "Clari" he was in better spirits and wrote to Anna (in May, 1823), telling her that in order to work more undisturbed, he had taken a country house at Versailles, which, with a large garden, cost him only fifty dollars until January 1. "I am looking for a cat, rabbits, a large dog, pigeons and a cock and hens, pour faire mon ménage.... My best regards to all the 'first loves' you mention; and assure them that I take as a great unkindness their having married my friends, since it puts it entirely out of my power to prove my sincerity by making them widows."

An early edition of "Clari" is to be found at the Astor branch of the New York Public Library. It is a 24mo, and shows the marks of age and of much handling before having been deposited in the library. Although it is undated, it appears to have been printed about 1829. The title-page reads: "Clari, or the Maid of Milan. An Opera in two acts. By John Howard Payne, Esq. Author of Brutus, The Lancers, Ali Pacha, Charles the Second, etc. Embellished with a fine engraving, by Mr. Bonner, from a Drawing, taken in the Theatre, by Mr. R. Cruikshank. London. John Cumberland."

Three casts are given—the original with Miss A. M. Tree as Clari, that of 1826 with Miss Paton, and that of 1829 with Miss Foote.

There also are some introductory remarks signed "D——G," who passes the following comment upon the three Claris:

"Miss Paton's singing in 'Clari' was

MISS A. MARIA TREE, THE FIRST PERSON WHO SANG
"HOME, SWEET HOME"

faultless, but she failed to impart to her acting that fine sensibility which distinguished the performance of Miss M. Tree. It was this young lady who first brought the beautiful air of 'Home! Sweet Home!' into such high esteem,—an air to which every generous heart beats a response. Miss Foote, in 'Clari,' is pretty and graceful."

Payne wrote two additional stanzas to "Home, Sweet Home," under circumstances which were narrated to General James Grant Wilson by Fitz-Greene Halleck, and which General Wilson gives in his book "William Cullen Bryant and His Friends:"

"Many years ago," said Halleck to the writer, "a friend of mine was dining in London with an American lady, the wife of an opulent banker, a member of the house of Baring Brothers. During the evening Mr. Payne called and presented her with a copy of 'Home, Sweet Home,' set to music, and with

[illegible] additional verses addressed to [illegible] which I never have seen in print." The lines are as follows:

[illegible] temples of the absence of years,
[illegible] remembrance of home still appears!
[illegible] which but flatter the eye,
[illegible] arms and sighs with a sigh,
[illegible] Home!
[illegible] Home!
[illegible] Home!

[illegible] all her ties are broken,
[illegible] with many a vow!
[illegible] our dreams are the
[illegible]
[illegible] Home!
[illegible] Home!
[illegible] Home!

[illegible] in this country soon [illegible] performance in London. [illegible] remained a favorite [illegible] among the distinguished [illegible] who were heard in it here [illegible] Kean and Matilda Heron. [illegible] changing taste in theatrical [illegible] disappeared from the stage. [illegible] however, more than [illegible] after its author's death,

"Clari" was given at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, largely as a result of the efforts of Payne's biographer, Gabriel Harrison. John Gilbert, E. M. Holland and Phillis Glover (as Clari) were in the cast, and about two thousand dollars were realized toward a monument in Prospect Park, which was unveiled in September of the same year.

Payne left England and returned to the United States in 1832. Ten years later, and again in 1851, he was appointed Consul at Tunis. There he died April 9, 1852, far from home and with no relative or friend at his bedside. He was buried in St. George's Cemetery, overlooking the Bay of Tunis and the ruins of ancient Carthage.

> Hands of the stranger, ring the mournful knell —
> Homeless the bard who sang of home so well!

It seemed as if even after death mischance must pursue him. For in the inscription on his gravestone both his birthplace and the date of his death

were wrongly given. Moreover, in order to settle the debts he left behind, amounting to about seven hundred dollars and incurred mainly in improving the Consulate building, his effects, including his library and many MSS., were sold. A collection of MSS. in bound volumes, an autograph album and a few other articles were not appraised or sold; and subsequently the album was offered for sale in New York at a larger price than the sum total of his debts. Among his effects was a box resembling a bound volume and stamped "The Code of Texas." It contained two Colt's revolvers.

In 1885 W. W. Corcoran, who when a boy had seen Payne act, had the poet's remains transferred from Tunis to Washington. When the body reached Washington it was placed in the Corcoran Art Gallery. On June 9 the remains were reinterred in Oak Hill Cemetery, the President of the United States, his Cabinet, and a mili-

FACSIMILE OF AN AUTOGRAPH COPY OF
"HOME, SWEET HOME"

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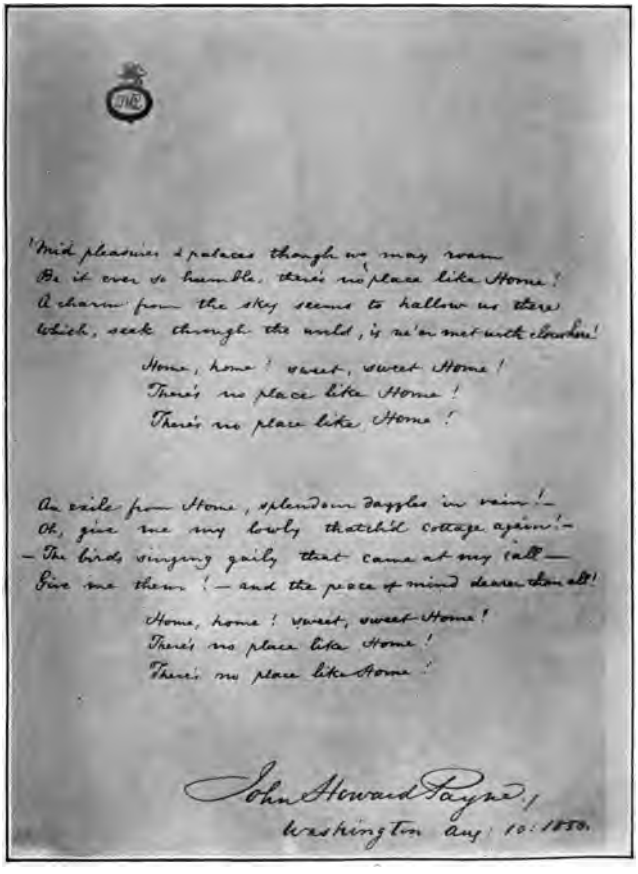

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There's no place like Home!

John Howard Payne,
Washington Aug: 10: 1850.

FACSIMILE OF AN AUTHOR'S COPY OF
"HOME, SWEET HOME"

tary escort forming part of the cortége, — a contrast to the poet's sad life and lonely death which conveys its own commentary. But, at least, they were bringing him "home."

Old Folks at Home

II

"Old Folks at Home"

HORTLY after Herr Wilhelmj, the great German violinist, reached New York, in 1878, he went to a music store and asked if they had an arrangement of an American song which he thought was called "Black Jack."

No—they did not know of any song of that title. Was Herr Wilhelmj sure it was correct?

Thereupon Herr Wilhelmj pursed his lips and whistled a tune. "Ah!" exclaimed the clerks; "he wants 'Old Black Joe.'" Much to the virtuoso's gratification it was quickly forthcoming.

"Old Black Joe" was written and composed by Stephen Collins Foster, who also wrote and composed "Old Folks at Home" and other songs, in all about one hundred and sixty. Many of them have become genuine songs

of the people, and the most popular, "Old Folks at Home," has been translated into nearly all European and several Asiatic languages. Even during Foster's lifetime his music was on thousands, perhaps millions, of lips, but the people who sang his songs passed the man by. It has been said with justice that during the last years of his life, which were passed in New York, the most familiar sounds he heard about him were strains of his own music, the least familiar sight a face he knew. Now he is recognized—and, after the way of the world, too late for it to prosper him—as having possessed positive genius for the invention of simple yet tender and refined melody which has not been without its influence in shaping the development of musical taste in this country. The refinement of Foster's melodic invention is an important factor. Sometimes a popular air is the starting-point of the formation of musical taste. It may be a

STEPHEN COLLINS FOSTER

far cry from "Old Folks at Home" to appreciation of the "Ninth Symphony" or Wagner opera; but it would be a further one if Foster had caught popular fancy with slap-dash, vulgar tunes instead of with the refined and gently melancholic strains of his best productions. Doubtless it was this refinement and tenderness which attracted Wilhelmj to the air he asked for—even if his ignorance of English led him to call it "Black Jack."

Foster wrote the words for nearly all his songs. They are not remarkable as poetry, but they go very well with the music. Moreover they express sentiments that are universal—love of home, of mother, of wife, of sweetheart—sentiments that appeal instantly to the popular heart, and they are melodious and easy flowing. Probably not one person out of a thousand, if so many, had heard of the "Swanee Ribber" before Foster's "Old Folks at Home" was published, and but for that

song, the stream doubtless still would be threading its way to the Gulf of Mexico in obscurity. How did the composer chance to hit upon the name that fits in so perfectly with the verse and with the sentiment of the music?

One day in 1851 Foster entered his brother Morrison's office in Pittsburg.

"Morrison," he said, "I 've got a new song, and I want the name of some Southern river in two syllables to use in it."

His brother suggested Yazoo. That would n't do. Then Pedee. Foster would n't have it. Morrison then took down an atlas from his shelf and opened it on his desk at the map of the United States. Together the two brothers looked over it. At last Morrison's finger stopped at a little river in Florida.

"That 's it! That 's it!" Foster exclaimed delightedly. "Now listen." He hastily scribbled in a word on a piece of paper he had in his hand, and then read to his brother the lines beginning,

"Way down upon de Swanee Ribber." Can the line be imagined as "Way down upon de Yazoo Ribber?" or "Way down upon the Pedee Ribber?" One produces an eccentric, the other a comic effect, whereas "Swanee" has the melodious, flowing sound that Foster was seeking. The song has placed a halo of sentiment over the Swanee, with the result that most people who see it are disappointed. 'T is the river of song, and best viewed through the delicate mist of music.

OLD FOLKS AT HOME

Way down upon de Swanee Ribber,
Far, far away,
Dere's wha ma heart is turning ebber,
Dere's wha de old folks stay.
All up and down de whole creation
Sadly I roam,
Still longing for de old plantation,
And for de old folks at home.

All de world am sad and dreary,
Ebery where I roam;
Oh, darkeys, how my heart grows weary,
Far from de old folks at home!

All round de little farm I wander'd
When I was young,

Den many happy days I squander'd,
Many de songs I sung.
When I was playing wid my brudder
Happy was I,
Oh! take me to my kind old mudder,
Dere let me live and die.

One little hut among de bushes,
One dat I love,
Still sadly to my mem'ry rushes,
No matter where I rove.
When will I see de bees a-humming
All round de comb?
When will I hear de banjo tumming
Down in my good old home?

About the time Foster composed "Old Folks at Home" he received a request from Christy, the famous Negro minstrel, then appearing with his company in New York, for a new song with the right to sing it before it was published. Christy also desired to have at least one edition bear his own name as author and composer. Foster showed Christy's letter to his brother, who drew up an agreement whereby the minstrel undertook to pay five hundred dollars for the privileges he had requested, and despatched it to

CHRISTY, THE FAMOUS MINSTREL WHO FIRST SANG
"OLD FOLKS AT HOME"

Christy, who sent it back, duly signed, by return mail. This explains why Christy's name appears on the title-page of the first edition of "Old Folks at Home."

This song and "Home, Sweet Home" probably are the most widely known songs in the English language, and it is a singular coincidence that both have longing for home as their underlying sentiment. "Old Folks at Home" has been called the "song of the home-sick" and the potency of its appeal is illustrated by an anecdote. During the civil war a Northern regiment had its pay so long delayed that most of the soldiers, in a state bordering on mutiny, broke through the sentry lines, made for a town near camp and at night returned in a condition of riotous inebriety. In vain the officers and the few men who had remained sober tried to subdue the bedlam that had broken loose and bring about some semblance of order. At last, when even the colo-

nel had been defied, the bandmaster called his musicians about him, spoke a few words, and the next moment the strains of "Old Folks at Home" were heard above the shouts of the obstreperous soldiers. Within twenty minutes the half-drunken crowd had wept itself to sleep. It was a wonderful illustration of the power that lies in a melody which goes straight to the heart.

Stephen Collins Foster, like John Howard Payne, the author of "Home, Sweet Home," came of good family; and, like Payne's life, his too was unfortunate, notwithstanding bright prospects in youth. His father, William Barclay Foster, was a general merchant in Pittsburg, from where he despatched goods on flatboats down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans. About twice a year he made the trip himself, sometimes returning overland, sometimes by vessel to New York. On one of these voyages he was

captured by pirates off the coast of Cuba, but was liberated by a Spanish man-of-war. William Barclay Foster was married in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, in 1807, to Eliza Clayland Tomlinson. The newly wedded couple crossed the mountains to Pittsburg, a distance of nearly three hundred miles, on horseback. The elder Foster was a substantial business man. He purchased a large tract of land, then outside of Pittsburg, but now part of the city, which he named Lawrenceville in honor of Captain James Lawrence of "Don't give up the ship" fame. During the War of 1812 when Washington had been burned by the British and New Orleans was threatened, urgent orders came to Pittsburg for supplies for Jackson's band of defenders, but no money accompanied the orders. Foster nevertheless shipped the supplies, which reached Jackson in the nick of time. But the government never settled for them, and the judg-

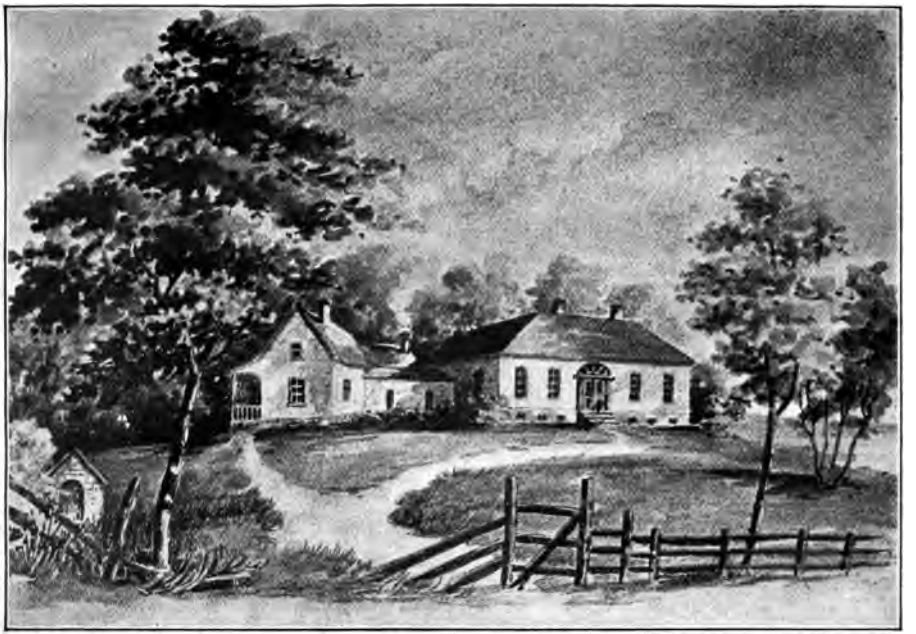
ment which Foster recovered still stands unsatisfied on the records of the United States Court at Pittsburg. His patriotism, however, undiminished, he donated a piece of ground in Lawrenceville for a soldiers' burial-place. A monument marks the site.

Of William Barclay Foster's children Morrison Foster died as recently as 1904. He was a man of means. Another son, William Foster, was the first vice-president of the Pennsylvania Railroad; a daughter married Rev. Edward Y. Buchanan, a brother of President Buchanan, and her daughter is the wife of the president of one of the great railway systems of the United States. Henrietta Crosman, the actress, whose full name is Henrietta Foster Crosman, is another direct descendant. She is a grandniece of Stephen Collins Foster, and from her and her mother, who was the first person to sing several of his songs, many of the facts for this article have been obtained.

These family details are interesting because they show that Stephen was of gentle birth, which goes far to account for the delicacy and refinement which give his melodies much of their charm. He was the idol of a tender, devoted mother, and the pet of the family; and there was no reason why his life should not have passed unclouded and happy save that he became a slave to drink, so that he died in want in a New York hospital, and came near to burial as an unidentified pauper in the potters' field.

It was July 4, 1826, in the midst of the celebration of fifty years of American independence, and the band on the grounds of the Foster residence at Lawrenceville (now part of Pittsburg) playing "The Star-Spangled Banner," that Stephen Collins Foster was born. When he was two years old he would lay his sister's guitar, which he called his "ittly pizani" (little piano), on the floor, and pick out harmonies on the

strings. At eight years of age he taught himself the flute, and later the piano. His first composition to be publicly performed was a waltz, the "Tioga," which he wrote for four flutes, and played with three of his fellow-students at the commencement of the Athens (Pennsylvania) Academy, where it was received with great applause. His first published song was "Open thy Lattice, Love." He was then sixteen. When he was nineteen he formed a singing club among the young men of his acquaintance. It met twice a week at his father's house, and he conducted. After a while he began composing songs for this club. The first was "The Louisiana Belle." A week later he wrote one of his best known songs, "Uncle Ned." As an illustration of his happy faculty of expression it is pointed out that when he wrote the line, "His fingers were long like de cane in de brake," he never had been below the Ohio, yet the aptness of the



THE FOSTER HOMESTEAD, NEAR PITTSBURG

simile will strike any one who has seen a sugar-cane plantation.

In running over the list of Stephen Collins Foster's songs it is found to include many that are so familiar that the popular mind does not associate them with any particular composer, but takes for granted that they "just growed." Nothing could go farther to prove that although they were consciously composed, they have all the characteristics of genuine folk songs, and that, simple as they are (three chords of the key usually suffice Foster for harmony), they are destined to survive. A year after he had composed "Uncle Ned," and while he was clerking it in his brother Dunning's office in Cincinnati, he wrote "Oh, Susanna." Not having as yet taken up music professionally, he made a present of these two songs to a friend, who cleared ten thousand dollars from them, and developed what was then a small musical publishing business into one of the

largest houses in its line in the West.

Several of Foster's songs echoed his personal feelings. "Massa's in de Cold Ground," though of course a darky song, was written under the sorrow and feeling of loneliness caused by his father's death; "Old Dog Tray" in memory of a beautiful setter he had owned; "My Old Kentucky Home" as a musical souvenir of the picturesque homestead of his relative, Judge and United States Senator John Rowan, of Bardstown, Kentucky. It is said that "My Old Kentucky Home" was written by Foster while he and his sister were on a visit to the Rowan home. One morning while the slaves were at work and the darky children romping, the two young visitors were seated on a bench in front of the homestead. In a tree overhead a mockingbird was warbling. From a bush near by came the song of a thrush. According to the story, Foster wrote and composed the song then and there;

and when enough of it was jotted down for his sister to obtain an idea of the melody and of the first stanza, she took the sheet from his hand and in a sweet, mellow voice, that chimed in with the surroundings, sang,

The sun shines bright in the old Kentucky home;
'T is summer; the darkies are gay;
The corntop 's ripe and the meadow 's in the bloom,
While the birds make music all the day.

One Sunday afternoon in the home of one of his brothers, he sat with one leg over the arm of his chair, whistling. After a while he went to a table and began writing some words and music. Then he called his niece (who afterwards became Mrs. Crosman) to the piano, and together they tried over what he had first whistled and then put down on paper. Later in the day he arranged it for quartet, and in the evening he, his niece and his brother went to a neighbor's, where the lady of the house sang soprano, and tried over the quartet. Thus his most am-

bitious composition, "Come where my Love lies Dreaming," was written both as a solo and as a quartet and sung in both forms, all in the course of an afternoon and evening.

Foster is described as a man of comparatively small stature (five feet seven inches), but of great physical courage. Mrs. Crosman tells me that at a dance he presented a bouquet of flowers to a girl who was engaged and that when her fiancé protested rather more violently than seemed necessary, Stephen promptly knocked him down. The incident led to the breaking off of the engagement. One night, on his way home, he saw two ruffians attacking a drunken man, promptly interfered, and fought off the two men in a rough-and-tumble combat, during which he received a knife-wound on the cheek which left a lifelong scar.

Though never unwilling to risk a personal encounter when he thought himself justified in so doing, he was deeply

sympathetic and tender-hearted. On one occasion when he saw a little girl run over and killed—she was crossing the street of a rainy night, her shawl drawn over her head and face so that she did not see or hear the horses approaching—he followed the body to the home of her parents, who were poor working-people, and remained with them all night trying to comfort them as best he could. At the same time he was proud and sensitive and resented the least slight. A woman issuing a verbal invitation to a party said, "Tell Stephen to come, and to be sure and bring his flute." He sent the flute—but stayed at home himself.

He was a light sleeper. A newly bought clock, which he had placed on his mantel-shelf, so disturbed him with its loud tick that he got out of bed, wrapped a blanket around the offending clock and put it in a bureau drawer. But the dull throb which reached his ear was even more tantalizing than

the sharper sound had been. He arose again, carried the clock and blanket downstairs and placed them in the cupboard. But in his room he heard, or fancied he heard, the distant throb of the timepiece like a muffled funeral note. This time he carried clock and blanket to the remotest recess of the cellar, where he covered them with a washtub; then, carefully closing every door behind him, he ascended to his room, and at last was able to go to sleep. One night a strange dog, prowling about the place and howling, so disturbed Foster that he seized a poker and, dashing out, chased the animal away. Next day the family made merry of this incident at the expense of the author and composer of "Old Dog Tray."

At times he wrote songs which he did not consider good enough to send to his publishers. "Uncle Stephen," Mrs. Crosman once asked him, "why do you take the trouble to write out

those ugly things that you tear up almost as soon as you have them on paper?"

"Because," he replied, "it's the only way I can get them out of my head and make room there for something better."

Probably his most familiar songs are, Beautiful Dreamer, Come where my Love lies Dreaming, Don't bet your Money on the Shanghai, Gentle Annie, 'Gwine to run All Night, Hard Times come again no More, I see Her still in my Dreams, Jenny June, Laura Lee, Louisiana Belle, Massa's in de Cold Ground, My Old Kentucky Home, Nelly was a Lady, Nelly Bly, Old Dog Tray, Oh Boys, carry Me 'Long, Old Folks at Home, Old Black Joe, Oh, Susanna, Under the Willow she's Sleeping, Uncle Ned, Virginia Belle, Willie, we have Missed You, and When this dreadful War is ended. He also wrote and composed fifteen hymns.

In 1850 Foster married Jane Denny McDowell, the daughter of a leading Pittsburg physician. Shortly afterwards he was induced by flattering offers from his publishers, Firth, Pond & Co., of New York, to settle in that city. But after he had been there a year he grew so homesick that one day he announced that he was going home, disposed of his furniture before evening, and the next day, late at night, rang the bell of his parents' house. His mother recognized his footsteps and going to the door called out, "Is that my dear son come home again?" He was so affected by her voice that, when she opened the door, she found him crying like a child.

He remained at home until 1860 when, having separated from his wife, he again went to New York. There his unfortunate habits grew upon him and at times he walked the streets in an old glazed cap and shabby clothing which made him look more like a

tramp than the composer of songs that were being sung on every side. He would write and compose a song in the morning, sell it in the afternoon, and spend the proceeds in dissipation before night. In January, 1864, while ill with fever in a cheap hotel, he rose during the night for a drink of water, was so weak that he fell when near the washstand, and, in so doing, struck against the broken lip of the pitcher and gashed his neck. He lay on the floor insensible until discovered in the morning by a servant who was bringing towels to his room. On being revived he asked to be taken to Bellevue Hospital, where he died from fever and loss of blood on the thirteenth of January. His identity not being known at the hospital, his body for a time lay in the morgue, where friends finally traced it and prevented the composer of so many sweet and tender melodies from being buried as a pauper. It is sometimes said that corporations

have no souls, but both the Pennsylvania Railway and the Adams Express Company declined payment for conveying the remains to Pittsburg. He was buried beside his parents, a volunteer band, formed of the best musicians of the city, playing "Come where my Love lies Dreaming" and "Old Folks at Home" over his grave.

Dixie

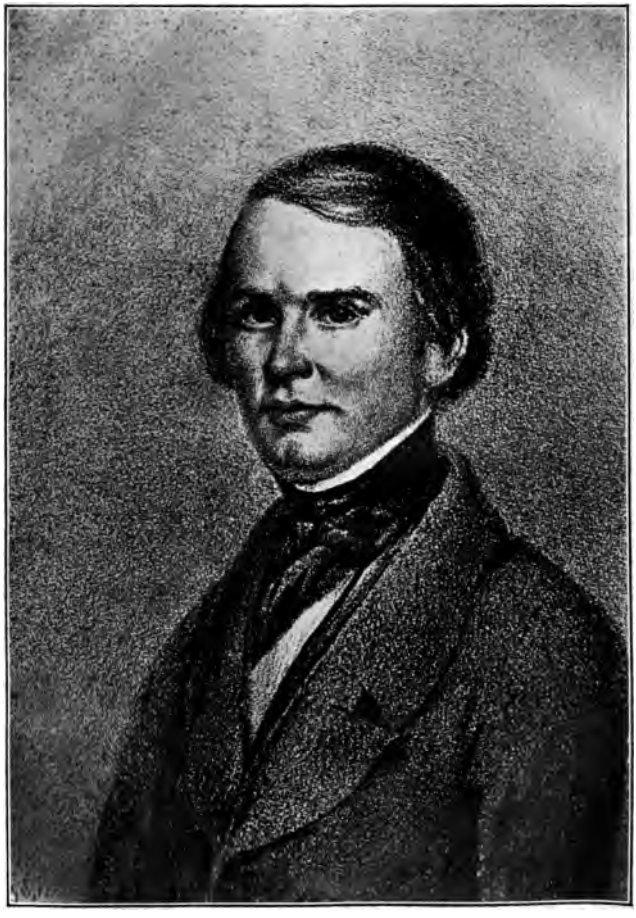
III

"Dixie"

ON the evening of June 28, 1904, the orchestra at the Waldorf-Astoria struck up "Dixie," which is on its programme almost nightly, and especially in summer, when so many Southerners are in New York. As usual a thrill of recognition and pleasure passed through the restaurant. Many people, Northerners as well as Southerners (for what once was the civil war song of the South long has been adopted by the whole country), beat time to the music by tapping on the floor with their feet, or on the tables with forks and spoons. While this unconscious tribute was being paid to a popular song, in what is perhaps the gayest nook in the New World, an old minstrel, loved by his humble neighbors but forgotten by the world at large, lay dying in a little clapboard hut on the outskirts of Mount

Vernon, Ohio. Forty-five years before, he had written and composed the song which at that moment, under the blaze of electroliers, was being played for the delectation of men and women any one of whom carelessly would spend for an evening's amusement more than he might have had to live on for a year. The old minstrel was Daniel Decatur Emmett, sometimes called for short "Dan Decate," but more generally known among the few stage veterans who remembered him at all as "Old Dan Emmett."

After Emmett's death some one asked, "Does it pay to be famous?" and pointed to his poverty as a negative answer. Yet the old minstrel was content. He had his hut, which was scrupulously clean; a garden patch and some chickens. A few years before he died that eminently practical charity, the Actors' Fund of America, learned of his whereabouts and granted him a small stipend. Occasionally he re-



DANIEL DECATUR EMMETT

7

ceived requests accompanied by remittances for his autograph or manuscript copies of "Dixie." Moreover, like many people of the stage (although this may surprise those whose acquaintance with it is merely casual), he was deeply religious. Often he could be seen sitting in the sun outside his door and reading his large copy of the Bible. Among the many manuscripts which he left was a set of prayers apparently of his own authorship. One of them was a grace before meals. Its appropriateness to his own humble circumstances is one of the most touching examples of unconscious pathos I know of. It does not, after the usual manner of such prayers, thank the Lord for his "bounty," but "for this frugal meal, and all other meals Thou hast permitted me to enjoy during my past existence." There surely was a spirit of resignation as rare as it was pathetic!

Emmett wrote "Dixie" while he was

a member of the famous Bryant's Minstrels which he had joined in 1857. He was known already as the composer of "Old Dan Tucker," and he was engaged by Bryant not only in the capacity of a stage performer, but also to compose Negro songs and walk-arounds. Those were the days of the real minstrel shows when "end men," "bones" and "interlocutor" were in their glory. The performance always wound up with an ensemble called the "walk-around," which was (or was supposed to be) a genuine bit of plantation life. The composition of fetching walk-arounds was a knack with Emmett that made him a valuable acquisition for a minstrel troupe. Moreover, he had a good voice and played many instruments, but especially violin and flute.

On Saturday night, September 17, 1859, after the performance, one of the Bryants told Emmett that a new walk-around was wanted in time for re-

hearsal on Monday. The minstrel replied that while the time was very short he would do his best. That night after he reached home he tried to hit upon some tune, but the music would n't come. His wife cheerily told him to wait until morning; he should have the room to himself so that he could work undisturbed, and when he had finished the walk-around he could play it for her as sole audience. If she liked it, the Bryants would, and so would the average listener.

Next day was rainy and dismal. Some years before, Emmett had travelled with a circus as a drummer. In winter the warm Southern circuit was a popular route with circus people, and those who were obliged to show North would say when the cold weather would make them shiver, "I wish I was in Dixie." The phrase was in fact a current circus expression. On that dismal September day, probably the beginning of the equinoctial, when

Emmett stepped to the window and looked out, the old longing for the pleasant South came over him, and involuntarily he thought to himself, "I wish I was in Dixie." Like a flash the thought suggested the first line for a walk-around, and a little later the minstrel, fiddle in hand, was working out the melody which, coupled with the words, made "Dixie" a genuine song of the people almost from the instant it was first sung from the stage of Bryant's Minstrels, then at 472 Broadway, New York, on the night of Monday, September 19, 1859.

When Emmett took the song to rehearsal it began with a verse which was omitted at the performance.

Dis worl' was made in jiss six days,
An' finish'd up in various ways;
Look away! look away! look away!
Dixie Land!
Dey den made Dixie trim and nice,
But Adam call'd it "Paradise."
Look away! look away! look away!
Dixie Land!

The minstrels were very careful never to put anything on the stage that might give offence in any way, and Mrs. Bryant, who was at the rehearsal, was afraid that these lines might offend people with pronounced religious scruples, though she told Emmett, diplomatically, that they were "very nice" in other respects. He included them in some of his manuscript copies of the song, but the version generally known begins with the familiar

I wish I was in de land ob cotton,
Old times dar am not forgotten;
Look away! look away! look away!
Dixie Land!
In Dixie land whar I was born in,
Early on one frosty mornin',
Look away! look away! look away
Dixie Land!

Chorus

Den I wish I was in Dixie! Hooray! Hooray!
In Dixie's Land we 'll take our stand, to lib an' die in Dixie.
Away! away! away down South in Dixie.
Away! away! away down South in Dixie.

The stanzas which followed underwent slight changes from time to time. In their final shape they are:

Ole missus marry "Will-de-weaber;"
Willum was a gay deceaber;
  Look away! look away! look away!
    Dixie Land!
But when he put his arm around her,
He smiled as fierce as a forty-pounder;
  Look away! look away! look away!
    Dixie Land!

His face was sharp as a butcher's cleaber;
But dat did not seem to greab her;
  Look away! look away! look away!
    Dixie Land!
Ole missus acted de foolish part,
And died for a man dat broke her heart;
  Look away! look away! look away!
    Dixie Land!

Now here 's health to de next ole missus,
An' all the gals dat want to kiss us;
  Look away! look away! look away!
    Dixie Land!
But if you want to drive 'way sorrow,
Come and hear dis song to-morrow;
  Look away! look away! look away!
    Dixie Land!

Dar 's buckwheat cakes an' Injin batter,
Makes you fat or a little fatter;
  Look away! look away! look away!
    Dixie Land!
Den hoe it down an' scratch your grabble,
To Dixie's Land I 'm bound to trabble;
  Look away! look away! look away!
    Dixie Land!

"DAN" EMMETT, IN OLD AGE

Mrs. Emmett had suggested plain "Dixie" as a title for the song, and her husband had adopted it. But when the song was published in 1860, it was called, "I wish I was in Dixie's Land,"—a line which does not occur in it. Afterwards it was published as "Dixie's Land"—but to the public it simply is "Dixie," which shows that when Mrs. Emmett suggested that one word for a title, she knew what she was about. Emmett himself stated that he received five hundred dollars for the copyright of "Dixie," and that what he had received for all his other songs put together (which, it should be remembered, included his popular "Dan Tucker") would be fairly represented by one hundred dollars; so that during a lifetime of eighty-nine years his receipts as a popular song composer amounted to six hundred dollars—and obscurity in a little Western town!

In 1894, when Emmett was seventy-

nine years old, a minstrel manager, who thought the composer of "Dixie" still might be profitably utilized as a venerable figurehead in a show, but who, like nearly every one else, had lost all track of Emmett, finally succeeded in tracing him to Mount Vernon. When, however, the manager reached there and began inquiring for "Dan Emmett, the composer of 'Dixie,'" the reply he got from the townspeople was:

"Friend, you've struck the wrong place. There's a Dan Emmett living here, sure enough, and he used to be with some show; but he never composed 'Dixie,' nor anything else."

This was Emmett's native town and he had been living in it again for six years; yet, until the minstrel manager made his inquiries, it was not known there that the kindly old man, in the little cottage on the outskirts of the place, was the composer of a song that had been, was being, and bid fair for-

ever to be, ground out on hand-organs, played by bands and sung as solo and chorus, from one end of the country to the other. Nowadays song composers understand better how to manage the thing. They arrive at their publisher's place of business in a hansom and drive away in an automobile; and when "Dixie" is played at the Waldorf-Astoria, they are there too—dining. Quite a contrast to the simple old man, whose most remarkable trait was his indifference to the fate of what he had written and who thanked God daily for "this frugal meal"!

Emmett was born in Mount Vernon, Ohio, October 29, 1815. His grandfather was a soldier in the Revolution, fighting under Morgan at the Cowpens. His father, who was a blacksmith, fought in the War of 1812, in the regiment commanded by Lewis Cass. Dan as a boy would "blow and strike" for his father in the latter's smithy. At intervals between his work he ran errands or played

the fiddle for the villagers. He managed to pick up an elementary education, and when thirteen years of age entered a newspaper office as compositor. The result of his experience in printing-offices is said to have been shown in the careful punctuation of his manuscripts. He still was working "at the case" when, at the age of fifteen or sixteen, he wrote "Old Dan Tucker." A year later he enlisted in the United States Army as a fifer, and during his service also learned to drum. More than sixty years later, after his death, there was found among his manuscripts one entitled "Emmett's Standard Drummer," which is a complete school for fife and drum "according to the 'Ashworth Mode.'"

After serving a full enlistment he travelled with various circus bands. At that time Negro minstrelsy was as yet unknown, although there were individual Ethiopian performers, like Dan Rice of "Jim Crow" fame. Emmett had

THE EMMETT COTTAGE AT MOUNT VERNON, OHIO

travelled with Rice whose performances possibly suggested the Negro minstrel idea to the young drummer. As in all such cases, various claims to priority are advanced, but it is certain that early in 1843, in New York, Emmett organized a string quartet, with violin, banjo, tambourine and bones, and named it the Virginia Minstrels, first carefully looking up the word minstrel in the dictionary to assure himself that it could be applied appropriately to the new organization. The costume consisted of white trousers, striped calico shirt and blue calico coat with exaggerated swallowtails. It was not until some years later that the regulation evening dress was adopted as the costume most suitable to the mock dignity of minstrelsy.

Emmett's troupe showed successfully in various American cities, but when it adventured a tour of England it promptly stranded. Its organizer returned to New York, found that his

idea had been utilized by others, and eventually joined Bryant's Minstrels. From that time on and until he returned to Mount Vernon, his occupation was Negro minstrelsy. His retirement was due to his age and to the fact that changes in the style of minstrel performance had made him a "back number." As the composer of "Dixie" he had long since been forgotten. He actually had been overshadowed by its popularity.

The vogue of "Dixie" as the war song of the South seems to have originated in the excitement it caused when sung on the stage of the New Orleans Varieties Theatre in the spring of 1861, when Mrs. John Wood was appearing there in "Pocahontas." A feature of the performance was a zouave march which was introduced into the last scene. A catchy tune was wanted for this, and Carlo Patti, the leader of the orchestra, after trying over several pieces, decided on "Dixie." He little

knew what that decision would mean for the song. When the zouaves marched on the first night, led by Miss Susan Denin, singing "Dixie," the audience went wild and demanded seven encores. From New Orleans it seemed to flash over the entire South; the Washington Artillery had the tune arranged for a quickstep and the whole section of the country rang with it. Pickett ordered it played before his famous charge at Gettysburg. Thus the anomaly was presented of a song written and composed by a man who was born in the North, and who as a matter of fact sympathized with the North, becoming the war song of the South. General Albert Pike and others wrote additional verses, and these form the only foundation for the claim sometimes advanced that Emmett was not the author and composer of "Dixie," whereas his name has appeared on the copyrighted title-page of the song ever since its earliest publication.

General Pike's words to "Dixie" first appeared in the "Natchez Courier" April 30, 1861. Here are some of the characteristic stanzas:

Southrons, hear your country call you!
Up, lest worse than death befall you!
To arms! To arms! To arms, in Dixie!
Lo! all the beacon fires are lighted,
Let all hearts be now united!
To arms! To arms! To arms, in Dixie!

Chorus

Advance the flag of Dixie! Hurrah! Hurrah!
For Dixie's land we take our stand, and live and die for Dixie!
To arms! To arms! And conquer peace for Dixie!
To arms! To arms! And conquer peace for Dixie!

Hear the Northern thunders mutter!
Northern flags in South winds flutter!
To arms, &c.
Send them back your fierce defiance!
Stamp upon the accursed alliance!
To arms, &c.

Fear no danger! Shun no labor!
Lift up rifle, pike and sabre!
To arms, &c.
Shoulder pressing close to shoulder,
Let the odds make each heart bolder!
To arms, &c.

How the South's great heart rejoices,
At your cannons' ringing voices!
To arms, &c.
For faith betrayed and pledges broken,
Wrongs inflicted, insults spoken,
To arms, &c.

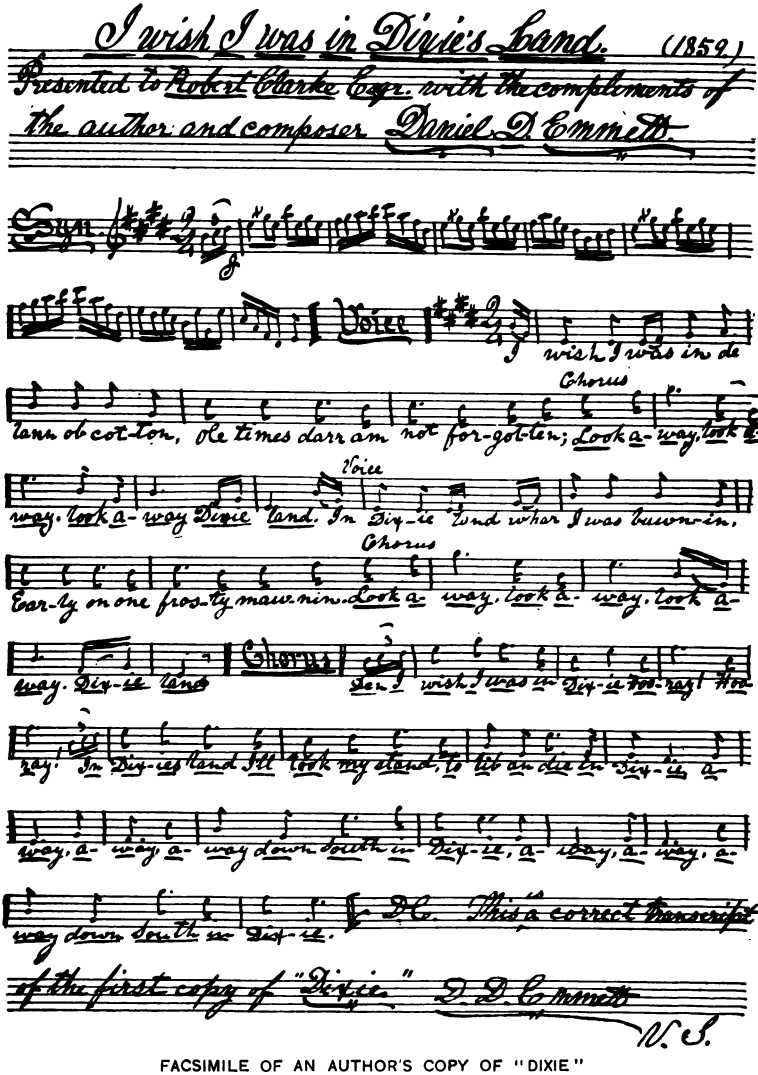
A further version that was very popular with Southern soldiers began:

Away down South in de fields of cotton,
Cinnamon seed, and sandy bottom!
Look away! look away! look away! look away!
Den 'way down South in de fields of cotton,
Vinegar shoes and paper stockings!
Look away! look away! look away! look away!

Another interesting fact regarding "Dixie" is that immediately after the evacuation of Fort Moultrie and before the fall of Sumter, Fanny Crosby, the blind hymn-writer, wrote Northern words to the tune, and it was hit or miss whether "Dixie" would become a Northern or a Southern war song, or both. But Fanny Crosby's words were not "smart" enough, and as a Southern song, it had the immense advantage that the original stanzas, even without the additions of Pike and

others, sufficed. During the war poor Emmett, who had written the song simply as a minstrel walk-around and who, having parted with the copyright for a paltry sum, never benefited by its enormous popularity, received letters from Northern patriots denouncing him for disloyalty, and suggesting a rope's end as the most appropriate punishment for his "treason."

When he was eighty years old he at last had a taste of what it is to be famous—and one season of it was enough for him. He went out with a minstrel troupe in the supposed rôle of venerable figurehead. But when at the first performance the orchestra struck up "Dixie," he rose and, with old-time gestures and in a voice tremulous with age, sang the song. Throughout the South he was the object of ovation after ovation. He was grateful, but he also was amused, for he could not help thinking of the humble origin of his song and how far it had gotten



FACSIMILE OF AN AUTHOR'S COPY OF "DIXIE"

Reproduced through the courtesy of Alexander Hill

away from its original purpose and his own sentiments when it became a war song. One day, while strolling about Richmond, Virginia, he paused in front of Stonewall Jackson's monument, and the better to read the inscription, raised his hat and shielded his eyes with it from the sun. That evening one of the newspapers came out with big headlines announcing that "Daniel Decatur Emmett, the author of 'Dixie,' like the true Southron that he is, bows with uncovered head before the monument of Stonewall Jackson." Emmett knew it was kindly meant, but he appreciated the unconscious humor of the situation too.

On the whole he enjoyed the tour, but did not attempt another. It was "too much of the same thing for an old man." He went back to Mount Vernon, and never left it again. And now that he is dead, his grateful countrymen, who allowed him at the age of eighty-nine to raise chickens, hoe in a garden and

chop wood for a sparse livelihood, are planning to erect a monument in his honor! The only redeeming feature of it is that he did n't much care.

Ben Bolt

7

IV

"Ben Bolt"

THE first time those "three mousquetaires of the brush," Taffy, the Laird and Little Billee, heard Miss Trilby O'Ferrall sing

"Oh, don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt?"

that young woman had not yet fallen under the influence of the sinister Svengali and been hypnotized by him into singing more divinely than any one else in Europe. Her "Ben Bolt" was half weird, half ludicrous; the mere outline of the melody delivered with immense volume of tone, without, however, a single note being exactly in tune.

After Trilby had gone, Little Billee was made by Taffy to sit down at the piano and sing it. "He sang it very nicely with his pleasant little throaty English barytone." Then Svengali, impatiently shoving him off the piano

stool, played a masterly prelude to the song; and Gecko—as Du Maurier describes it—cuddling lovingly his violin and closing his upturned eyes, played that simple melody as it probably never had been played before—such passion, such pathos, such a tone!—and they turned it and twisted it, and went from one key to another, playing into each other's hands, Svengali taking the lead; and fugued and canoned and counterpointed and battledored and shuttlecocked it, high and low, soft and loud, in minor, in pizzicato, and in sordino—adagio, andante, allegretto, scherzo—and exhausted all its possibilities of beauty; till their susceptible audience of three was all but crazed with delight and wonder; and the masterful Ben Bolt, and his over-tender Alice, and his too submissive friend, and his old schoolmaster so kind and so true, and his long-dead schoolmates, and the rustic porch and the mill, and the

THOMAS DUNN ENGLISH, ABOUT 1845

slab of granite so gray, were all magnified into a strange, almost holy poetic dignity and splendor quite undreamed of by whoever wrote the words and music of that unsophisticated little song, which has touched so many simple British hearts that don't know any better.

"Whoever wrote the words"! Fifty years before Du Maurier penned the passage I have quoted, "Ben Bolt" was written by an American. When "Trilby" was published, the author of "Ben Bolt" still was living; he lived, in fact, until 1902, surviving Du Maurier eight years. But although the poem had been published in a periodical, had been sung all over the English-speaking world, and had formed the pivotal point in one of the greatest sensations in literary history, its author never received a penny for it. Moreover to his dying day he resented its popularity as compared with the reception accorded his maturer writ-

ings, which he knew to be better.

I met him once by appointment in his own house and conversed with him for about an hour without knowing that he was the author of "Ben Bolt," and not until the "Trilby" craze nearly twenty years afterwards did I discover that he was. In the autumn of 1876, in the midst of a hotly contested presidential campaign, I carefully prepared an extemporaneous stump speech for delivery before a political club in Leonia, New Jersey. As I still was a callow youth, a college boy, one of the politicians of the neighborhood, who evidently was suspicious of my efforts, advised me to show my speech to a Dr. English of Fort Lee, who, although a practising physician, took a lively interest in politics and made campaign speeches himself. Accordingly I climbed up the rear of the Palisades of the Hudson to Fort Lee, where I found the doctor living in a small house. He was a somewhat elderly,

dignified gentleman, a trifle old-fashioned in his attire, and who struck me more like a character out of a book than a practising physician in the straggling settlement on top of the Palisades. He seemed to me decidedly above his somewhat plain, not to say meagre surroundings; a man who had not found life altogether easy, but had the grit to take it as it came. He read over my speech, advised me to leave out what I had considered its most resounding periods, and kindly explained to me why these oratorical flights had better be omitted. Long afterwards when "Trilby" was published, I discovered, while reading a review of the book, that the Dr. English of Fort Lee, who literally had raked the "chestnuts" out of the oratorical fire for me, was none other than Dr. Thomas Dunn English, the author of "Ben Bolt."

The circumstances under which the lines were written, and which were re-

lated to me by the author's daughter, Miss Alice English, who often heard them from her father, seem to take us far back in American literature. For Dr. English knew Edgar Allan Poe and many of the other early American writers. During the summer of 1843 he was visiting in New York, where he became acquainted with N. P. Willis, who with George P. Morris recently had revived the "New York Mirror." Willis asked English to contribute a sea poem, explaining, however, that the paper was run on very small capital and that its editors would be greatly obliged to him if he would let them have the poem just for the love of the thing. That was not an unusual request to be made by editors of American periodicals in those days. At all events English consented; then went home and forgot all about his promise until reminded of it by a letter from Willis.

He had the manuscript of a sea poem

which, however, he had discarded as not up to the mark, but which played its part, nevertheless, in the composition of "Ben Bolt." When he sat down at his desk to write something new for the "Mirror," it seemed as if the mantle of Dibdin was reluctant to fall upon him and the poem of the sea was not forthcoming. But by one of those curious reflex actions of the mind he drifted into reminiscences of his boyhood, and almost before he knew it he had written the line,

Don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt?

The poem consists of five stanzas of eight lines each, but not until the last line is there the slightest hint as to its hero's walk in life, when suddenly he is apostrophized as "Ben Bolt of the salt-sea gale!"—a line that gives considerable "lift" to the whole and adds a touch of vigor to what was simply a sentimental ballad. It looks as if Dr. English had bethought himself at the

ish that Willis had asked for a sea
oem, and, in order to comply with the
uest, had introduced the line at the
d of five stanzas in which the sea
s conspicuous by its absence. The
riously interesting fact is, however,
t when he was halfway through
last stanza, his inspiration abso-
lutely gave out. He "got stuck," as
more commonplace saying is—
en he chanced to think of the dis-
ded sea poem and simply copied
the last four lines of it on to what he had written, making them the last four lines of "Ben Bolt," which was duly published in the "New York Mirror" of September 2, 1843, with a few commendatory words (by way of compensation) from the editors, and signed with the author's initials, "T. D. E."

"Ben Bolt" was set to music at least three times. The first version, which never was published, was made by Dominick M. H. May, of Baltimore, a young composer who at the time re-

sided in Washington. In 1848 a melody composed by English himself was printed in Philadelphia, but it was not a success. The tune which carried "Ben Bolt" to the farthest ends of the English-speaking world had appeared two years before. It was a German melody which had been adapted to the words, or rather to a garbled version of them, by a strolling minstrel performer named Nelson Kneass.

This Kneass came of a good family, which had disowned him for going on the stage. He was a brother of Horn B. Kneass, who at one time was United States District Attorney for Eastern Pennsylvania. Kneass had a sweet tenor voice and became a favorite, but always was more or less of a rover. While appearing at a theatre in Pittsburg he was told by the manager, who was preparing to produce a play by a local writer entitled "The Battle of Buena Vista," that if he could get a new song he would be cast in the

piece. One of the hangers-on at the theatre was a former English newspaper man, A. M. Hunt. The minstrel consulted him about words, and Hunt told him that he had read some years before in a newspaper in England a poem called "Ben Bolt" of which he remembered enough to be able to piece it out for music. Kneass told him to go ahead, and Hunt produced three stanzas, made up in part of the original, in part of lines which Hunt supplied himself. Kneass adapted a German melody to them, sang the piece in the play, where it made a great hit, and it became almost instantaneously popular. Afterwards the music and the garbled version were published, and to this day the song is printed with the incorrect words. Two of the lines which Hunt had remembered correctly,

> And the shaded nook by the running brook,
> Where the children used to swim,

were changed at the insistence of the publisher, who objected that to sing

THOMAS DUNN ENGLISH, IN OLD AGE

about children in swimming would offend the sense of delicacy of some of his customers. In consequence the natatory diversions of the young hopefuls were eliminated from the printed version, and the youngsters have not been permitted to go in swimming since—at least not in the song! Kneass received little for the musical setting. He continued his wandering life, until he died at Chillicothe, Missouri, where he had "stranded" with a theatrical troupe. He was buried there, and his headstone proclaims him the author of "Ben Bolt." But as he neither wrote the words nor composed the music, the attribution seems somewhat far-fetched.

As most people know "Ben Bolt" through the song only, and as Dr. English's original is far superior to the garbled version, it seems only just that it should be given here as he wrote it:

Don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt? —
Sweet Alice, whose hair was so brown,
Who wept with delight when you gave her a smile,
And trembled with fear at your frown!
In the old churchyard, in the valley, Ben Bolt,
In a corner obscure and alone,
They have fitted a slab of the granite so gray,
And Alice lies under the stone!

Under the hickory tree, Ben Bolt,
Which stood at the foot of the hill,
Together we've lain in the noonday shade,
And listened to Appleton's mill.
The mill-wheel has fallen to pieces, Ben Bolt,
The rafters have tumbled in,
And a quiet that crawls round the walls as you gaze
Has followed the olden din.

Do you mind the cabin of logs, Ben Bolt,
At the edge of the pathless wood,
And the button-ball tree with its motley limbs,
Which nigh by the doorstep stood?
The cabin to ruin has gone, Ben Bolt,
The tree you would seek in vain;
And where once the lords of the forest wàved,
Grows grass and the golden grain.

And don't you remember the school, Ben Bolt,
With the master so cruel and grim,
And the shaded nook by the running brook,
Where the children went to swim?
Grass grows on the master's grave, Ben Bolt,
The spring of the brook is dry,
And of all the boys who were schoolmates then,
There are only you and I.

There is change in the things I loved, Ben Bolt,
They have changed from the old to the new;
But I feel in the depth of my spirit the truth,
There never was change in you.
Twelvemonths twenty have past, Ben Bolt,
Since first we were friends — yet I hail
Thy presence a blessing, thy friendship a truth,
Ben Bolt of the salt-sea gale!

It will be noticed that in the poem the schoolmaster is "cruel and grim," while in the song he became "kind and true," a weakening of the original which is found in every change in Hunt's version. The change to which English himself objected most was the elimination of the two lines beginning "And a quiet that crawls," which he considered the one touch of real poetic value in his stanzas. But in spite of the poor opinion which its author held of "Ben Bolt," it is easy to account for its popularity past and present. The lines have an easy swing, the reiteration of the name "Ben Bolt" is effective, and the whole voices the vain regrets with which, in later years, every one is apt to look back upon a

youth that is gone forever. William Vincent Wallace, the composer of "Maritana," wrote a piano fantasy on "Ben Bolt" which has attained the distinction of being included in what I may call the "clothes-wringer" repertory. For it has been "perforated," and put on a roll, and thus can be ground out on the mechanical piano. "Perforated" fame is the grand modern test of popularity. Let struggling poets and disheartened composers cheer up. For in these modern days every cloud has a "perforated" lining!

During the "Trilby" craze the requests for Dr. English's autographs became so numerous that, owing to an affection of the eyes which resulted in almost total blindness,—it being painful for him even to write his signature,—he was obliged to send a set printed declination in reply. Before he adopted this method he received a request from a woman not

only for his autograph, but also for a lock of his hair. To this he replied that as he just had paid a visit to his barber, who had cut off his hair at both ends, she would have to wait until he had grown a new crop. Another woman wrote him that she long had wondered whether the original Alice was as sweet and charming as the one portrayed in the poem; and was she pretty? As there was no original Alice, these questions remained unanswered.

Although Dr. English was anything but methodical, he liked to be considered so. He had a set of pigeonholes over his desk all carefully labelled, but the contents were apt not to correspond with the labels. Thus under "Statistics" would be found a package of Little Dahlias for his garden.

His wife, whom he survived, was a fine pianist, a pupil of William Mason. After her death it greatly depressed Dr. English to hear the piano played,

and to spare his feelings the instrument was kept on the third floor of the house.

The doctor was nothing of a poseur. Once when a canvasser for an élite directory called for his name and subscription, his reply was, "Get out of here, we don't belong to the élite!" One of his idiosyncrasies was his insistence on making his own ink, and he used to say that he would have made a fortune if he had started an ink factory. When, in 1890, he was elected a Representative in Congress from the Essex district of New Jersey, he found that, notwithstanding his own low estimate of "Ben Bolt," much courtesy was shown him as its author, some of the members telling him that when they were children, their mothers had sung it to them. He used to relate that soon after the song was published, a ship, a steamboat and a race horse were named after it; adding, "The ship was wrecked, the steam-

Ben Bolt.

2

Do ah! you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt,
Sweet Alice whose hair was so brown,
Who wept with delight when you gave her a smile,
And trembled with fear at your frown.
In the old churchyard in the valley, Ben Bolt,
In a corner obscure and alone,
They have fitted a slab of the granite so grey,
And Alice lies under the stone.

Under the hickory tree, Ben Bolt,
Which stood at the foot of the hill,
Together we've lain in the noonday shade,
And listened to Appletom's mill.
The mill-wheel has fallen to pieces, Ben Bolt,
The rafters have tumbled in;
And a quiet which reigns o'er the walls so famed
Has followed the noisy din.

Do you mind of the cabin of logs, Ben Bolt,
A step from the pathless wood,
And the button-ball tree with its motley limbs,
Which nigh by the door stood?
The cabin to ruin has gone, Ben Bolt,
The tree you would seek for in vain;
And where once the lords of the forest waved
Are grass and the golden grain.

"

And do ye remember the school, Ben Bolt,
With the master so cruel and grim,
And the shed-house in the running brook
Where the children went to swim?
Grass grows on the master's grave, Ben Bolt;
The spring of the brook is dry;
And of all the boys who were schoolmates then
There are only you and I.

There is change in the things I love, Ben Bolt,
They have changed from the old to the new;
But I feel in the depths of my spirit the truth—
There never was change in you.

Twelve months, twenty have passed, Ben Bolt,
Since first we were friends; yet I hail
Your presence a blessing, your friendship a truth,
Ben Bolt of the salt sea gale.

Thos Dunn English

The foregoing is a correct version
of three stanzas as usually sung,
much mutilated.

Thos Dunn English

AUTHOR'S COPY OF "BEN BOLT"

Manuscript in possession of the author's son-in-law,
the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee

boat blew up, and the horse never won a race"—all of which was true. He considered these untoward events in some way in accord with his own ill luck in never having made a penny out of the poem.

His greatest diversion was gardening, and even in Newark, where he passed his latter years, with his daughter as sole companion and amanuensis, he had his little garden plot, which always was in bloom during the season. Here one autumn, although he was nearly blind, he planted lilies. "I doubt if I live to see them," he remarked to his daughter. Nor did he. Before they bloomed he was in his grave.

The Star-Spangled Banner

V

"The Star-Spangled Banner"

VER a grave in Frederick, Maryland, the American flag floats every day of the year and is reverently renewed on each Memorial Day. The grave is that of Francis Scott Key, author of "The Star-Spangled Banner." At one time the flag was the only monument to him in his native state. Indeed the first sculptured memorial to the author of our national song was erected in a state which was foreign territory when the song was written. It was the gift of a private individual, James Lick, and looks out upon the Pacific from Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. There could not, however, be a nobler monument to Key than the flag that ever floats over his grave, nor one more appropriate. Nor is it by any means

unfitting that the first sculptured monument to him should have been erected on a site which was not even part of the United States when "The Star-Spangled Banner" was written. It shows how wholly national the song has become. It follows the flag!

Key was a lawyer by profession, and in his day argued some notable cases. As a poet he was a dilettante. Yet his professional achievements are forgotten, and he lives in a poem inspired by chance circumstance. Indeed, Preble, who wrote a book on the American flag, went out of his way to argue that the poem lacked the qualities of a national anthem because it referred to a special occasion. Yet every evening at sunset, when the garrison flags of the United States are lowered,—in Porto Rico, on Governor's Island, at the Presidio, in the Philippines,—the band plays "The Star-Spangled Banner," and the same thing occurs on the flagship of every United States naval

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

squadron, in whatever part of the world it may be. Preble failed to discern that, although the poem was inspired by an actual event of which Key was a thrilled spectator, it nevertheless is broadly symbolic of American patriotism and, withal, neither boastful nor threatening, its sentiments being based upon right and justice, so that now it is taught probably in every public school in the land as an exalted expression of love of country.

"The Star-Spangled Banner" came straight from the heart of a patriot. Remarkable indeed were the circumstances which inspired in this dilettante author of a few devotional songs and some trifles in verse, addressed to friends and members of his family, a burst of poetry destined to thrill a whole people and to expand with the boundaries of the country. They form a sequence of events as dramatic in their outcome as the climax in a well constructed play.

When in August, 1814, Admiral Cockburn and his fleet returned from the West Indies to the coast of the United States, he notified James Monroe, then Secretary of State at Washington, that, at the request of the Governor-General of Canada, he would take measures of retaliation for what he characterized as the "wanton destruction" committed by the American army in upper Canada. The British fleet at the time was in the Patuxent River, which empties into the Chesapeake, so that the towns which Cockburn threatened to "destroy and lay waste" were Baltimore, Washington and Annapolis. The first object of his vindictive expedition was the capital of the country. Cockburn's military forces landed at Benedict's, on the Patuxent. The first day's march brought them to Nottingham, the second to Upper Marlborough. One of the prominent residents of that place was Dr. William Beanes, who was destined to play a

conspicuous rôle in the events which later were to result in the writing of "The Star-Spangled Banner." Several officers of high rank were quartered upon him. Although they were unwelcome guests they were courteously treated and entertained.

Meanwhile an American army was concentrating at Bladensburg. Some of the regiments, as they arrived, were assigned to their positions by a handsome young aide-de-camp, none other than Francis Scott Key, who, though a lawyer, had volunteered for military duty. That the Americans were defeated by the British under Ross, who burned the public buildings in Washington, is history. But enough energy remained in the force which had been dispersed at Bladensburg to attempt the interception of the British when they should withdraw to their ships. This led Ross, for fear he might have to encounter an entrenched enemy in his rear, to order the withdrawal of

his troops from the capital by forced marches. A violent storm broke during the night, and the following morning the troops looked more as if they were retreating than an army withdrawing after a victory and the sacking of the enemy's capital.

Their appearance deceived the good people of Upper Marlborough, and when, after the main body of the troops had passed through the town, three stragglers stopped to drink at a spring on Dr. Beanes' grounds, the doctor, who was celebrating with some friends the supposed discomfiture of the enemy, had them seized and confined in jail. One of them, however, escaped, fell in with a party of British cavalry, and notified them of the violence to which he and his comrades had been subjected, with the result that the cavalrymen rode back to Upper Marlborough and not only freed the two soldiers, but, furthermore, roused Dr. Beanes from his bed at midnight and

KEY'S GRAVE AT FREDERICK, MARYLAND, OVER WHICH THE FLAG FLOATS

bore him away a captive to Admiral Cockburn. Indeed, it looked very much as if Dr. Beanes were destined to swing from the yardarm of a British frigate.

The worthy doctor, who, it must be confessed, had been guilty of hasty and indiscreet conduct, to say the least, was what is known as a "prominent citizen." Moreover he was an intimate friend of Francis Scott Key, who at once applied to the Government for permission to attempt to secure his release. A vessel at Baltimore which was used as a flag of truce for the exchange of prisoners, and was in charge of John S. Skinner as commissioner, was placed at Key's disposal. When the ship dropped down the Chesapeake to the British fleet, Admiral Cockburn was preparing for the expedition against Baltimore. Key preferred his request for his friend's release, and was informed that Dr. Beanes would have been strung up on a yardarm but for his courtesy as a

host, and the fact, which had been ascertained since he had been apprehended, that several British officers wounded at Bladensburg had been skilfully treated by him. He would be released, but neither he nor Key would be allowed to return to Baltimore, because of a certain important event then impending. This of course was the projected attack on the city, of which Admiral Cockburn did not wish its defenders forewarned. Accordingly the three Americans were for the time placed on board H. M. S. Surprise. Key was informed that as soon as the fleet reached its destination, only a few hours would elapse before he would be allowed to land, for Admiral Cockburn considered that the reduction of Fort McHenry, by which Baltimore was defended, would be an easy matter. He little knew that the attack was destined to become famous in American history for an entirely different reason.

The fleet moved up the Chesapeake and at North Point disembarked the military forces for the land attack on the city. On Tuesday morning, September 13, 1814, the British warships in semi-circular battle formation ranged themselves across the Patapsco, at a distance of about two and a half miles off the fort, which, although a small affair of brick and earth, lay low and squat like a bulldog on guard, on a projecting point of land. When the fleet had formed for the attack, the three Americans were allowed to go aboard their own vessel, but were not permitted to land.

The British ships would have been well within range of modern ordnance, but the 42-pounders with which the fort was armed in 1814 could not reach the fleet, so that the Americans were unable to reply to the bombardment that lasted from Tuesday morning until after the following midnight. Key, who from his residence in Georgetown

had seen less than a month before the light of the burning buildings in Washington, knew the fate in store for Baltimore if the attack succeeded, and the feelings with which the three Americans from the deck of their vessel watched the bombardment may well be imagined. Moreover Key had a deep personal concern in the result. The fort was defended by a small force of regulars supplemented by volunteer artillerists, the latter under command of Judge Nicholson, who was Key's brother-in-law.

The strain upon the three Americans who followed the bombardment from the deck of their cartel was tremendous. To them the little fort subjected to attack both from land and water, and unable to reply to the fire of the fleet, seemed doomed, and with it the city itself. But at sunset the flag still waved from the ramparts. Sleep was out of the question. It was driven from their minds not only by the noise of

the bursting bombs, but also by the tension to which they were subjected. Would the flag upon which their eyes had rested at the last gleam of twilight, still fling its stars and stripes to the morning air, or would the fort have surrendered? These questions forced themselves upon Key and his companions as they paced the deck.

After midnight there was a cessation of firing. An hour later it was renewed with terrific force and at closer quarters. Toward dawn it ceased. Had the fort been demolished, or the enemy driven back? So long as the firing continued it was evident that the Americans were holding out. But now the suspense was terrible. At dawn vapors still shrouded the shore from the straining eyes of the three Americans; but at seven o'clock a rift disclosed the flag still proudly floating above the ramparts. The attack had failed.

This was the supreme moment. Thrilled by it, Key drew a letter from

his pocket and on the back of it wrote the first stanza of his immortal poem.

He himself was not aware of just what had happened. All he knew was that the flag "was still there." But soon after midnight Admiral Cockburn had received word that the land attack on the fort had been repulsed and Ross killed, and that, unless the works could be reduced by the fleet, the expedition would end in failure. This accounted for the fierce bombardment at close quarters which had begun at one o'clock in the morning and in which sixteen British frigates with a full complement of bomb-ketches and barges had taken part. The crisis was reached when a portion of the enemy's forces attempted to steal up the north channel to the city. They passed the fort unnoticed, and believing their ruse successful began cheering derisively. But they made the mistake of celebrating their expected triumph too soon. The cheers disclosed their pur-

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER WHICH INSPIRED THE SONG

pose to the gunners of a small water battery at what is known as the Lazaretto, who promptly opened fire and put the enemy out of action.

In the boat which took him ashore Key finished the poem, and that night, at a hotel in Baltimore, he revised it, making a few changes which left it substantially as it now is. The following morning he showed it to his brother-in-law, Judge Joseph Hopper Nicholson, whose appreciation of the sentiments that breathe through the lines was all the keener because he had been one of the defenders of the fort. Nicholson at once took it to the office of Benjamin Edes, printer, where it was set up in the form of a handbill by an apprentice named Samuel Sands, all the men in the printing-office having volunteered for the defence of the fort and not yet having returned to work.

On the handbill the poem was surrounded by an elliptical border out-

side of which "Bombardment of Fort McHenry" was printed as a title, and, in the ellipsis, "Written by Francis Scott Key, of Georgetown, D. C." In reading over the poem Judge Nicholson perceived that the tune of the old English drinking-song, "Anacreon in Heaven," which had been used before in this country as a setting for the patriotic song "Adams and Liberty," was well adapted to the metre of "The Star-Spangled Banner," and he indicated the tune on the handbill. These facts, of which I have been apprised through the courtesy of Mrs. Edward Shippen, of Baltimore, who is a granddaughter of Judge Nicholson and a grandniece of Key, and who owns a copy of the first handbill as well as the original manuscript of the poem, disposes of the claim that Ferdinand Durang, an actor at the Holiday Street Theatre, Baltimore, suggested the tune of "Anacreon" for Key's poem, although it is not unlikely that he was

the first person to sing it publicly from the stage of that theatre.

The original manuscript, written on the back of an unsigned letter, shows how few were the changes which Key found it necessary to make in the poem he wrote under the inspiration of that thrilling moment when he saw the flag of his country still waving over Fort McHenry. In the first stanza there is a change of only one word. He had written "through" instead of "by the dawn's early light." In the third stanza he had started to write, "They have washed out with blood," &c. This he changed to read, "Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution."

About 1840 Key made some manuscript copies of the poem, and then introduced a few minor changes. But as corrected in the original in Mrs. Shippen's possession, and here reproduced with her permission, it reads as follows:

O say can you see by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight
O'er the ramparts we watch'd were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bomb bursting in air
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
O say does the star-spangled banner still wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in deep silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream.
'T is the star-spangled banner — O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

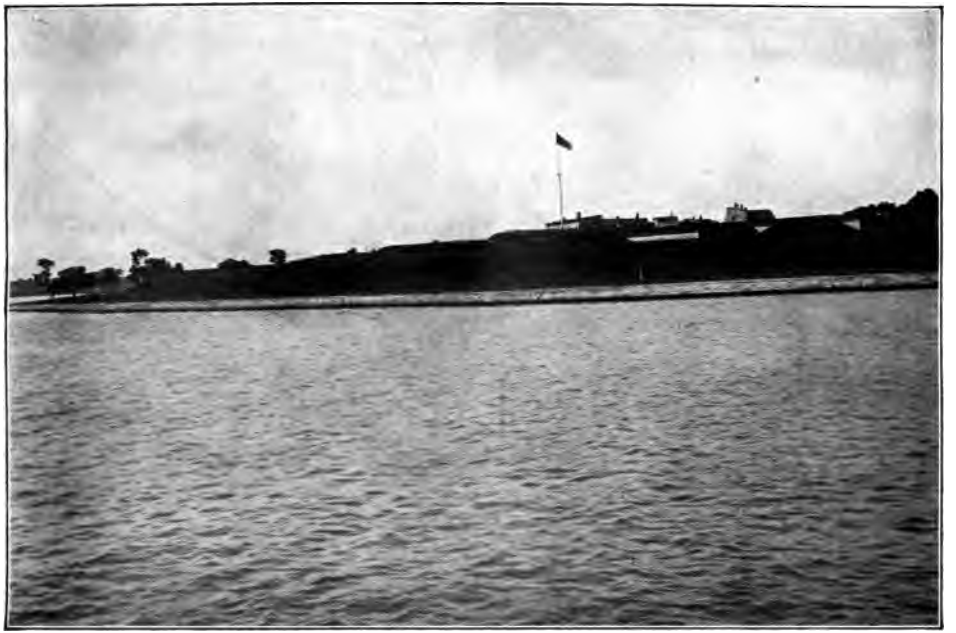
And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a Country should leave us no more?
Their blood has wash'd out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight and the gloom of the grave.
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

O thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
Between their lov'd home and the war's desolation!
Blest with vict'ry and peace may the Heav'n-rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserv'd us a nation!

Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust."
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

After the Spanish War, when it became known that England had held out against a proposed European coalition the object of which was to bring pressure upon us to prevent our going to war, the old spirit of hostility toward our mother country vanished, and a "blood is thicker than water" sentiment, which seems to be enduring, happily was substituted for the old-time rancor. This led to the dropping of the spirited third stanza, in which Key anathematizes the English, from some of the common school readers. This fact lately having come to public notice has roused much resentment, and it is likely that Key's poem will be restored to its original form by legislative enactment throughout the country. The trouble really dates back farther than the Spanish

War, for the original emasculator of "The Star-Spangled Banner" was, curiously enough, that good American, Oliver Wendell Holmes, who, in 1866, interpolated stanzas referring to the Civil War and its outcome. This version found its way into many school readers, with the odd result that, in 1903, some Confederate veterans attending a school celebration in New Orleans were astounded, when the exercises opened with the singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner," to hear themselves execrated by their own grandchildren for the part they had played in the great struggle. As the result of a protest from the United Confederate Veterans, at least one publishing house went to an expense of about six thousand dollars to issue a new edition of its school readers without the Holmes stanzas. The trouble was, however, that the original third stanza, for which Holmes' lines had been substituted, was not restored.



FORT McHENRY, BALTIMORE

In all respects Francis Scott Key was worthy of the honor which "The Star-Spangled Banner" has brought to his name. He not only was a man of great personal charm, he bore an unblemished reputation. That frequently misapplied term "an ideal Christian gentleman" appears to have fitted him to perfection. He was a gentleman by birth and breeding, and a Christian both in his faith and his conduct. It was through his influence that John Randolph, who had become inoculated with the doctrines of Voltaire and his followers, turned back to his old belief. "Were I Premier," wrote Randolph to Key, "I certainly should translate you to the See of Canterbury."

Key was born in Frederick County, Maryland, in August, 1780. He died at Baltimore on January 11, 1843. A remnant of the flag which thrilled his vision on that memorable morning in September, 1814, still exists. It is thirty-

two feet in length by twenty-nine feet in the hoist. It is believed originally to have been at least forty feet long and thirty feet in the hoist. Its great size is accounted for by the fact that it had fifteen stripes, each nearly two feet wide, with fifteen five-pointed stars, each two feet from point to point. In those days a stripe, as well as a star, was added to the flag for each new state. Later it was seen that the flag would become unwieldy if the number of stripes was further increased, and thirteen, the number of the original states, was fixed upon as the limit.

The Fort McHenry flag was made by Mrs. Mary Pickersgill, whose mother, Rebecca Young, made the first flag of the American Revolution under Washington's direction. Mrs. Pickersgill took care to have the topping of the flag especially strong, and doubtless it was due to this precaution that, although a bomb and a fragment of another passed through the flag, it

was not torn from the staff. The hole and the rent can be seen in the part of the star-spangled banner still in existence and said to be in the possession of a descendant of the gallant Armistead who commanded the garrison.

Key's song immediately became popular. Within a few months after the bombardment of Fort McHenry it was played by one of the bands at the battle of New Orleans. It has thrilled the American soldier and sailor on many an historic occasion. It figured too in the tragedy at Apea, Samoa. When the Trenton, herself doomed and at the mercy of the hurricane, bore down upon the stranded Vandalia, a burst of music was heard through the darkness and above the storm. 'T was the band on the wave-swept deck of the flagship playing the "The Star-Spangled Banner"!

No other nation possesses so noble an apostrophe to the flag. It is neither

boastful nor vindictive. It breathes the most exalted spirit of patriotism, but it also appeals to justice and to the Power above. For it is the work of a man who loved his country and, no less, his God.

Yankee Doodle
Hail Columbia and America

VI

"Yankee Doodle"

"Hail Columbia" and "America"

MORE falsehoods probably have been written about "Yankee Doodle" than about any other song. It has been said that the tune originally was known as "Fisher's Jig," named after Kitty Fisher, "a beauty of Charles II's time," and that it is to be found in Walsh's "Collection of Dances," for 1750. Unfortunately Kitty Fischer (not Fisher) was not a beauty of Charles II's time. The only Kitty Fischer who was at all a public character was married in 1766 to a Mr. Norris, and died in 1771, probably, from what is known about her, of sudden respectability. There is no "Fisher's Jig" in Walsh's book nor any other tune resembling "Yankee Doodle."

Still more remarkable is the attribu-

tion of Dutch origin. It is claimed that the harvesters in Holland received in payment for their labor a share of the grain they harvested and as much buttermilk as they could drink; and that they voiced their joy in these words, sung to the tune of "Yankee Doodle:"

Yanker, dudel, doodle down,
Diddle, dudel, lanther,
Yanke viver, voover vown,
Boter milk and tanther.

But these words are neither Dutch, Hindustanee nor Choctaw—in fact belong to no language whatever, not even Volapük. The claim is a hoax, yet has gravely been incorporated into at least one encyclopaedia and several books.

Another claim made is that in Cromwell's day the Cavaliers sang,

Nankee Doodle came to town,
On a little pony,
He stuck a feather in his cap,
And called him Macaroni.

"Nankee Doodle" is supposed to have

been Cromwell, and "Macaroni" a derisive reference to his "single white plume." But the Lord Protector is not known to have worn a single white plume, while Macaroni, as a derisive sobriquet, was not in use in England until about the middle of the eighteenth century, when it was applied to the fops of the so-called "macaroni" clubs,—"composed," writes Walpole, "of all the travelled young men who wear long curls and spying glasses."

Attempts to derive it from Spain and Hungary are unworthy the consideration of any one who is at all familiar with the musical characteristics of those countries. In fact, about the only certain thing concerning the tune is that the old nursery rhyme,

> Lucy Locket lost her pocket,
> Kitty Fisher found it;
> Not a bit of money in it,
> Only binding round it—

was sung to it long before the vogue

of the "Yankee Doodle" words in America.

Even that standard authority, Grove, makes a manifold error in attempting to give the first reference in print to "Yankee Doodle." It is not the earliest reference, he assigns the passage he quotes to a wrong source, and he does not quote it with entire accuracy. Grove states that it appeared in the "Boston Journal of the Times" for September 29, 1768. The obvious inference from this statement is that the reference was published in a Boston newspaper, but there was none of that name. It was one of several captions used as headlines to Boston correspondence published in the "New York Journal;" but as a matter of fact the headline under which the reference to "Yankee Doodle" appeared was "Journal of Transactions in Boston." The Boston date-line is as above, but it was not published until October 13, 1768, in the "New York Journal:"

"The Fleet was brought to Anchor near Castle William, that Evening there was throwing of Sky Rockets, and those passing in Boats observed great Rejoicings, and that the Yankey Doodle Song was the Capital Piece in their Band of Music."

The reference was run to earth by Mr. Albert Matthews of Boston, whose brilliant researches regarding the word Yankee and the "Yankee Doodle" song are well known to all students of Americana. In this instance he had the valuable assistance of Mr. Wilberforce Eames, of the New York Public Library. Moreover, Mr. Matthews has discovered an earlier reference to "Yankee Doodle" in a comic opera, "The Disappointment: Or, the Force of Credulity," by Andrew Barton, in which one of the airs is entitled "Yankee Doodle." The book was published in New York in 1767, and a copy of it is in the Ridgway Branch of the Philadelphia Library.

Although the tune was an old one even then, its first appearance as printed music was considerably later, and not in this country, but in Scotland and England. It is found in an issue of musical selections brought out by Aird in Glasgow, supposedly in 1782. The first instance of the printed tune, the date of which can be fixed with certainty, is in the score of "Two to One," a musical stage piece by the prolific, but now almost forgotten English composer, Samuel Arnold (not Arne as some accounts give it), and that was not until 1784. Yet it had been sung and marched to by the "old Continentals in their ragged regimentals" during the American Revolution.

The origin of its vogue in this country rests on tradition, for which it may be said, however, that the tradition is not wholly unreasonable. In 1755, during the war with the French and Indians, General Amherst was in com-

mand of a force of regulars and Colonials near Albany. The Colonial troops, arriving from various localities, in motley uniforms or none at all, and an equipment which it would be mild to describe as "assorted," excited the ridicule of the regulars. With the forces was a Dr. Richard Schuckburg, a surgeon, whose appointment as Secretary of Indian Affairs by Sir William Johnson in 1760, is recorded in the New York State papers. As a joke upon the motley Colonial contingent, Dr. Schuckburg called the attention of its officers to the old nursery tune which, he assured them, was a celebrated piece of martial music in England. To the vast amusement of the British regulars, the Colonials took to the air at once, pronounced it "'nation fine" and soon were singing words to it of which the jocose doctor probably was the author.

He little knew the ball he had started rolling. The American does not object

to fun at his own expense so long as it is good-natured, and the Colonials were quick to recognize the humor of the doggerel verses. There are fifteen stanzas to "Yankee Doodle," the original title of which is "The Yankee's Return from Camp," the whole being a description of a young hayseed's visit to the soldiers and what he saw there, until he scampered home in fright because some of them told him that a trench they were digging was intended for his grave.

THE YANKEE'S RETURN FROM CAMP

Father and I went down to camp,
Along with Captain Gooding;
There we see the men and boys
As thick as hasty-pudding.

Chorus

Yankee doodle, keep it up,
Yankee doodle dandy;
Mind the music and the step,
And with the girls be handy.

And there we saw a thousand men,
As rich as Squire David;
And what they wasted ev'ry day
I wish it could be savèd.

The 'lasses they eat ev'ry day
  Would keep a house all winter;
They have as much that I 'll be bound
  They eat it when they 're a mind to.

And there we saw a swamping gun,
  Large a as log of maple,
Upon a deuced little cart—
  A load for father's cattle.

And every time they shoot it off
  It takes a horn of powder;
It makes a noise like father's gun,
  Only a nation louder.

I went as nigh to one myself
  As 'Siah's under-pinning;
And father went as nigh again—
  I thought the deuce was in him.

Cousin Simon grew so bold,
  I thought he would have cocked it;
It scared me so, I streaked it off,
  And hung by father's pocket.

But Captain Davis had a gun,
  He kind of clapped his hand on 't;
He stuck a crooked stabbing iron
  Upon a little end on 't.

And there I see a pumkin shell
  As big as mother's basin,
And ev'ry time they touched it off
  They scampered like the nation.

I see a little barrel, too,
  The heads were made of leather,

They knocked upon it with little clubs,
And called the folks together.

And there was Captain Washington,
The gentlefolks about him;
They say he 's grown so tarnal proud
He will not ride without 'em.

He got him on his meeting clothes,
Upon a slapping stallion;
He set the world along in rows,
In hundreds and in millions.

The flaming ribbons in their hats,
They looked so tearing fine, ah;
I wanted plaguily to get,
To give to my Jemima.

I see another snarl of men,
A-digging graves, they told me,
So tarnal long, so tarnal deep,
They 'tended they should hold me.

It scared me so, I hooked it off,
Nor stopped as I remember
Nor turned about till got home,
Locked up in mother's chamber.

Other verses are to be found, such as:

Yankee Doodle came to town
Wearing leather trousers;
He said he could n't see the town,
There were so many houses.

and these lines, which were sung by the British troops:

Yankee Doodle came to town
For to buy a firelock,
We will tar and feather him,
And so we will John Hancock.

Oddly enough the most generally known words in this country seem to be the "macaroni" lines, which, as I have stated, some people have endeavored to refer back to Cromwell's day.

It has been said of the words to "Yankee Doodle" that they never will suffer from editing, as Shakespeare has, because they could not be worse. Nevertheless, ill-rhymed as they are, they have a rollicking spirit, and they describe inimitably the goings-on at a poorly disciplined militia camp, such as that near Albany in 1755 doubtless was, and such as many militia camps have been since and still may be, as they were in the old "training days." Moreover, the tune is brisk and catchy

and the refrain has a verve that swings the whole thing along. Words and music together appealed irresistibly to the agile, frolicsome American mind and sense of humor. "Yankee Doodle" became the marching song, the "Malbrouck s'en va-t-en guerre," of the American Revolution. Given to the Americans in derision, it was in a derisive sense the bands of Lord Percy's troops played it when they advanced to the battle of Lexington —after which the laugh was with the Americans, and the air became known for a while as the "Lexington March." It is proper to state that Mr. Mathews does not regard the "Yankee Doodle" words as of earlier than Revolutionary origin.

The music of "Yankee Doodle" has appealed to at least two musicians of the highest standing. When Rubinstein was here for the first time (1872–3), he composed a set of variations on the air and played it at his

last concert. Paderewski began writing a fantasy on "Yankee Doodle" and intended dedicating it to William Mason, telling the latter that he greatly liked the tune. Mason found the fantasy capital, as far as it had been composed. But the Rubinstein variations already had been dedicated to him, and when he told this to Paderewski, and also informed him that, strictly speaking, "Yankee Doodle" is not a national air in the same sense as "God save the King" is with the English, the Polish musician was dissuaded from his purpose and did not finish the fantasy.

What is regarded as the first genuinely comic poem — comic as distinguished from mere doggerel — produced in this country was written to the tune of "Yankee Doodle." This was Francis Hopkinson's "Battle of the Kegs." In 1777 David Bushnell, a Connecticut Yankee, attempted to blow up the British fleet, then lying

at Philadelphia, by floating down the river kegs filled with powder and fitted with spring locks. One of the kegs exploded prematurely, and the British soldiers on shore, in great flurry and alarm, opened fire on the strange flotilla.

From morn to night these men of might
Displayed amazing courage;
And when the sun was fairly down,
Retired to sup their porridge.

Various attempts have been made to substitute stanzas of a more literary quality for the original words of "Yankee Doodle." George P. Morris, the associate of N. P. Willis, was among those who wrote new words. But although his "improved" lines were sung by the famous Hutchinson family, they never supplanted the ill-rhymed burlesque which the Colonials or Minute-Men, or both, had pronounced "'nation fine," and which may be called our national "Mother Goose," the nursery rhyme of the American army.

"YANKEE DOODLE"
From the painting by A. M. Willard

In 1876 there was exhibited at the Centennial in Philadelphia a painting entitled "The Spirit of '76, or Yankee Doodle." While imperfect technically, it was executed with such evident dramatic power that it made a deep impression, and since has become well known through frequent reproduction. A grim old man, his features sharp as an eagle's, is beating the drum. On his left a younger man is playing the fife. On the right a boy, also drumming, is looking up earnestly into the old man's face. The three are marching along as if borne forward by an irresistible force. Behind them an American flag is unfurled to the breeze and soldiers are following. In the foreground a dying soldier is cheering them with his last voice. The whole, in its bold outlines, portrays the spirit of daring and sacrifice on the part of old, middle-aged and young, which fought and won the American Revolution. This "Yankee

Doodle" picture shows one side of the "Yankee Doodle" song, which, although doggerel, was a war-song.

After the Centennial the painting was bought by General John Devereux, of Cleveland, Ohio, and presented by him to his native town of Marblehead, Massachusetts, where it hangs in the reading-room of Abbot Hall. It was painted by Archibald M. Willard of Cleveland.

Often it is said that the Austrian national hymn, "Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser," which was composed by Haydn, is the only known instance of the deliberate composition of an air which, intended to be national, really became so through popular acclaim. But we have a patriotic song which is popular enough to be called national and which appears to have been written with as much deliberation as Haydn's anthem. It was in fact written to be sung from the stage,

and had its first hearing at an actor's benefit. This benefit took place in Philadelphia, then the seat of the United States government, in April, 1798, and the actor concerned in it was one Gilbert Fox. A few days prior to the performance, the sale of seats having been slack, Fox taxed his brains in an effort to devise means to bring the receipts up to a point where they would show some profit instead of, as then, a heavy loss. War was in the air. There was severe tension between France and England, and in our own country, one party was in favor of aiding France in the impending struggle, another of siding with England, and excitement here ran high, there being much bitterness between the opposing factions. With an eye to his opportunity, Fox concluded that conditions were just right for a new patriotic song, and knowing a brilliant young lawyer, Joseph Hopkinson, a son of Francis Hopkin-

son, author of "The Battle of the Kegs," he carried his idea to him. Hopkinson promptly agreed to write the song, and did so, using the tune of the "President's March." That is the origin of "Hail, Columbia."

HAIL, COLUMBIA

Hail, Columbia! happy land!
Hail, ye heroes! heaven-born band!
  Who fought and bled in Freedom's cause,
  Who fought and bled in Freedom's cause,
And when the storm of war was gone,
Enjoyed the peace your valor won.
  Let independence be our boast,
  Ever mindful what it cost;
  Ever grateful for the prize,
  Let its altar reach the skies.

    Firm, united, let us be,
    Rallying round our Liberty;
    As a band of brothers joined,
    Peace and safety we shall find.

Immortal patriots! rise once more:
Defend your rights, defend your shore:
  Let no rude foe, with impious hand,
  Let no rude foe, with impious hand,
Invade the shrine where sacred lies
Of toil and blood the well-earned prize.
  While offering peace sincere and just,
  In Heaven we place a manly trust,
  That truth and justice will prevail,
  And every scheme of bondage fail.

FRANCIS HOPKINSON

Sound, sound, the trump of Fame!
Let WASHINGTON'S great name
  Ring through the world with loud applause,
  Ring through the world with loud applause;
Let every clime to Freedom dear,
Listen with a joyful ear.
  With equal skill, and godlike power,
  He governed in the fearful hour
  Of horrid war; or guides, with ease,
  The happier times of honest peace.

Behold the chief who now commands,
Once more to serve his country, stands
  The rock on which the storm will beat,
  The rock on which the storm will beat;
But, armed in virtue firm and true,
His hopes are fixed on Heaven and you.
  When hope was sinking in dismay,
  And glooms obscured Columbia's day,
  His steady mind, from changes free,
  Resolved on death or liberty.

Fox's announcement that a new patriotic song would be heard at his benefit packed the house. The song itself was an immense success. It was encored many times, and at the end every one in the house caught it up and joined in singing it. People recognized that it favored neither the French nor the English partisans, but was written in a spirit of broad,

self-reliant patriotism according to which this country and its own interests were sufficient unto themselves without foreign entanglements. It is difficult for us from this distance in time to form an idea of the effect produced by the song, but it did much to allay partisan excitement and to prevent the United States from meddling in foreign affairs. Doubtless President Adams's appreciation of this was his reason for seeking to countenance and even add to its vogue by attending the theatre with his entire cabinet, especially to hear the song a few nights after its first presentation. The play in which Fox appeared at his benefit was "The Italian Monk." This circumstance has led Louis C. Elson, a critic whose scholarship is seasoned with wit, to remark, with reference to the popularity of "Hail, Columbia," that having first been heard in connection with "The Italian Monk," it still continues to be heard

in connection with the Italian and his monkey."

Regarding the tune to which "Hail Columbia" is sung, the "President's March" was a very popular air and a capital selection. It is attributed to various composers, most persistently, perhaps, to a German-American musician named Roth, who resided in Philadelphia and is said to have composed the march for Washington's first inauguration, it being played for the first time in Trenton as Washington passed through there on his way to New York. But Mr. Oscar G. Sonneck, the learned head of the music department of the Library of Congress, who has carefully investigated this subject, states that the composer of the march cannot be named with any degree of certainty.

At a reunion of the Harvard class of 1829, Oliver Wendell Holmes read a

poem in which he devoted several lines to each of his classmates. Two of the verses ran as follows:

> And there's a fine youngster of excellent pith,
> Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith.

That Fate did not, however, succeed in its fell design, appears from further remarks made by the genial "Autocrat" sixty-five years after graduation. "Now there's Smith," said Dr. Holmes in 1894. "His name will be honored by every school child in the land when I have been forgotten a hundred years. He wrote 'My country, 'tis of thee.' Now if he had said 'Our country' the hymn would never have been immortal, but that 'My' was a masterstroke. Every one who sings the hymn at once feels a personal ownership in his native land. The hymn will last as long as the country."

Another distinguished American has had something to say about the hymn which brought the young gentleman whom Fate tried to conceal "by nam-

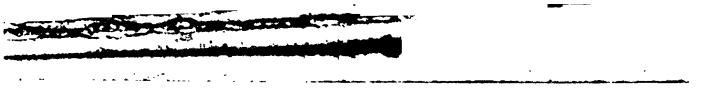
ing him Smith" into the open. Edward Everett Hale relates that on the Fourth of July, 1832, when he was ten years old, he had spent all his holiday money on root-beer, ginger-snaps and oysters at the celebration on Boston Common, and was on his way home when he saw a long line of children marching into the Park Street Church. He joined them, and during the exercises in the church, heard a new hymn, beginning "My country, 'tis of thee," rendered by five hundred voices. Thus by the merest chance, and because his money had been expended so rapidly, he was present at the first singing of the hymn which is national enough to be called "America."

It had been written in February of the same year by Samuel Francis Smith, who, having graduated from Harvard, was then a divinity student at Andover. As has been the case with so many other songs that have become popular, the circumstances under

which "America" was written were due to chance. If a friend of Lowell Mason's had not brought him a collection of German melodies from abroad, and if Mason had not turned over the book to the young divinity student with the remark that he would be glad to see any translations from the German words which the latter chose to make, Smith simply would have remained one of the Smiths and Fate would have had its way. As he turned over the leaves, however, he came to the air of "God save the King," and, struck with it, glanced at the German words at the foot of the page. Under the inspiration of the moment he wrote in half an hour, and on a scrap of paper which he picked up from the table, not a translation but an entirely original English, or rather American, set of words.

"America" as it appears in the hymnals to-day is substantially the same as it was penned by the Andover di-

SAMUEL FRANCIS SMITH



vinity student in that brief half hour of February, 1832.

AMERICA

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of Liberty,
  Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died;
Land of the pilgrims' pride;
From every mountain side
  Let freedom ring.

My native country! thee,
Land of the noble free,
  Thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills,
My heart with rapture thrills
  Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
  Sweet freedom's song;
Let mortal tongues awake,
Let all that breathe partake,
Let rocks their silence break,
  The sound prolong.

Our fathers' God! to thee,
Author of liberty!
  To thee we sing;
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light,
Protect us by thy might,
  Great God, our King!

At the celebration of the Washington Inauguration Centennial, the following verse was added, it is believed, by the author:

Our joyful hearts to-day,
Their grateful tribute pay,
Happy and free.
After our toils and fears,
After our blood and tears,
Strong with our hundred years,
O God, to thee.

Smith was born in Boston in October, 1808, so that he was only twenty-three years old when he wrote his famous hymn. He lived to be over eighty-seven, was a pastor, teacher and editor, and the author of other metrical pieces besides "America;" but no other inspiration equal to that chance one which resulted in "My country, 't is of thee," came to him during those long years of faithful service. When we consider, however, that many men of far more distinguished talents wait in vain for Fate to "strike twelve" we may conclude

that he was an exceptionally lucky man to have heard it strike for him that once.

Of the three patriotic songs which, next to "The Star-Spangled Banner," are best known, one, "Yankee Doodle," dates from Colonial days and is an ante-Revolutionary relic—was, in fact, a national air before we were a nation. It is wholly English in origin, but its humor is genuinely American, and it turned the tables neatly against the very ones who produced it in a spirit of derision. "Hail, Columbia" sprang wholly from American soil. "America" was written by a son of Massachusetts, but its tune is English. Nevertheless, it was for many years our national anthem and only lately has been supplanted by "The Star-Spangled Banner." The unfurling of our flag over distant islands of the Pacific has appealed to popular imagination which, rightly or wrongly,

sees in that flag the symbol of our prosperity, our valor and our liberty. Yet one of our best marches is based on a combination of "Yankee Doodle" and "The Star-Spangled Banner,"—Mother Goose and Old Glory,—which shows that, while the Constitution may not always follow the flag, our irrepressible sense of humor does.

Some War Songs

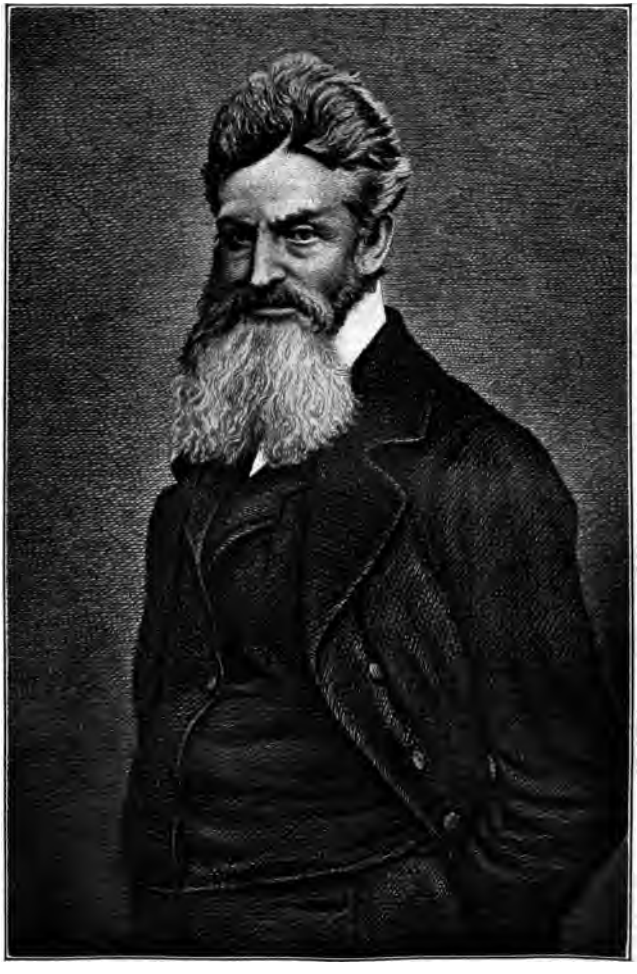
VII

Some War Songs

HE Civil War inspired many songs, most of which, however, were ephemeral. Oddly enough the "John Brown Song," which was the great marching song of the Northern armies and was sung many years later by Kitchener's soldiers in the Soudan and by Roberts's troops in South Africa, was discarded by our own men in the Spanish War for a popular tune of the day, "There'll be a hot Time in the old Town to-night," which may have seemed to them more appropriate to the occasion—and to the temperature.

There are two curious circumstances connected with the origin of the "John Brown Song." Just as "Dixie," the most popular song of the South, was the work of a Northerner, so the great Northern marching song was of Southern origin, being an old camp-meet-

ing hymn-tune. Moreover, while almost universally supposed to have originated in a grim tribute to the famous John Brown, of Ossawatomie, as if the soul, liberated from the body that swung at Harper's Ferry, were marching with the Federal armies, the song, in the beginning, referred to an entirely different John Brown. The words were the outcome of an effort on the part of members of a company of the Twelfth Massachusetts Infantry, which soon after the outbreak of the war was quartered at Fort Warren, Boston, to make sport of one of their comrades, a comical Scotchman named John Brown. However this may be, and it is vouched for on excellent authority, the regiment no doubt was the first to sing the song. As it marched to the front across Boston Common and afterwards down Broadway, New York, the "John Brown Song" reverberating from a thousand voices, words and music were caught up by the mul-



JOHN BROWN

titudes that lined the sidewalks, windows and roofs, and spread like wildfire from city to city, from camp to camp, from regiment to brigade, from brigade to division, from division to corps. Even before the regiment left Fort Warren, its officers, little realizing that the song was destined to become associated in the public mind with the famous John Brown and to achieve a vogue that was simply marvellous, had sought to have the troops change the name to Ellsworth, in memory of Colonel E. E. Ellsworth, the first commissioned officer killed in the war. But the attempt was vain. Simple "John Brown" suited the soldiers better, and when the song was published at Charlestown, Massachusetts, it bore the title "John Brown Song," and the "John Brown Song" it remained. In this first edition, one line is different from what it became shortly afterward. The kind of tree from which the threat is made to sus-

pend the president of the Confederacy is not specified. It simply is "a tree." The "sour apple tree" evidently was of slightly later growth, but in quoting the words I will make allowance for it.

JOHN BROWN SONG

John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave,
John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave,
John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave,
His soul's marching on!

Chorus

Glory Hally, Hallelujah! Glory Hally, Hallelujah!
Glory Hally, Hallelujah!
His soul's marching on.

He's gone to be a soldier in the army of the Lord,
He's gone to be a soldier in the army of the Lord,
He's gone to be a soldier in the army of the Lord,
His soul's marching on!

John Brown's knapsack is strapped on his back,
John Brown's knapsack is strapped on his back,
John Brown's knapsack is strapped on his back,
His soul's marching on!

His pet lambs will meet him on the way,
His pet lambs will meet him on the way,
His pet lambs will meet him on the way,
They go marching on!

They will hang Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree!
They will hang Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree!

They will hang Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree,
As they march along!

Now, three rousing cheers for the Union!
Now, three rousing cheers for the Union!
Now, three rousing cheers for the Union!
As we are marching on!

Chorus

Glory Hally, Hallelujah! Glory Hally, Hallelujah!
Glory, Hally, Hallelujah!
Hip, Hip, Hip, Hip, Hurrah!

The officers at Fort Warren were not the only ones who failed to recognize that the merit of these words lay in their very lack of literary finish and in their grim simplicity, and considered them undignified. Edna Dean Proctor endeavored to raise the song to what it would please the connoisseur to call a higher level, and wrote new words. But the "John Brown Song" survived the effort. In December, 1861, a party which included James Freeman Clarke and Julia Ward Howe visited an outpost of the army in Virginia, witnessed a skirmish, and heard the soldiers, as they returned

to camp, singing their favorite marching song. Dr. Clarke suggested to Mrs. Howe that she write better words to go with the sturdy rhythm of the music. The result was the "Battle-Hymn of the Republic," undoubtedly the finest poem produced by the Civil War, but not destined to be considered "better words" by the soldiers, who clung to their rude chant, the "John Brown Song."

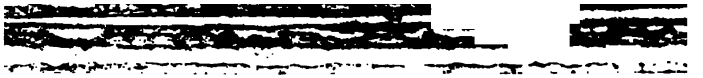
BATTLE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps.
His day is marching on.

From a Photograph, Copyright, 1902,
By J. E. Purdy, Boston

JULIA WARD HOWE



I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment-seat:
Oh! be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me:
As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.

No doubt it is too sectional to have been sung in the Spanish War when North and South marched shoulder to shoulder once more. Yet had it been sung by our troops in Cuba, it would now be, through its use by the British soldiers in the Soudan and in South Africa, the marching song

of the Anglo-Saxon race. Although, apparently, there no longer is a chance of that, it is famous enough to make it worth while to quote the old camp-meeting hymn on which it is based. This hymn is said to have been sung as early as 1856 in colored churches in Charleston, South Carolina, and to have been parodied by a fire company in that city. Its words are the simplest, and as in the "John Brown Song," the first line of each stanza is thrice repeated.

Say, brothers, will you meet us?
Say, brothers, will you meet us?
Say, brothers, will you meet us,
On Canaan's happy shore?

By the grace of God we'll meet you,
By the grace of God we'll meet you,
By the grace of God we'll meet you,
Where parting is no more.

Jesus lives and reigns forever,
Jesus lives and reigns forever,
Jesus lives and reigns forever,
On Canaan's happy shore.

The melody is attributed to William

Steffe, a composer of Methodist hymn-tunes.

Henry Clay Work's "Marching through Georgia" is a Civil War song which seems destined to survive. The fact that it is reminiscent commends it to veterans, and of course it always figured at celebrations of which Sherman was the central figure. The General professed a great dislike for the tune and protested annoyance whenever he heard it. He used to relate that one night while at a hotel abroad, he heard a band coming down the street playing the hateful tune. It seemed to have pursued him even into foreign parts. He quickly got into his uniform and went out on to the balcony under the impression that a serenade or welcome was to be tendered him. But to his surprise the band and its followers marched past without so much as any one looking up at him. The air is a popular one abroad—as

General Sherman discovered from this incident. There is no special history connected with the song, and, aside from its genuine merit as a war song, the most interesting fact about it is the General's dislike of it,—whether real or, as some of his friends believe, pretended,—a harmless idiosyncrasy of a great man.

MARCHING THROUGH GEORGIA*

Bring the good old bugle, boys, we'll sing another song—
Sing it with a spirit that will start the world along—
Sing it as we used to sing it, fifty thousand strong,
While we were marching through Georgia.

Chorus

Hurrah! Hurrah! we bring the jubilee!
Hurrah! Hurrah! the flag that makes you free!
So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the sea,
While we were marching through Georgia.

How the darkeys shouted when they heard the joyful sound!
How the turkeys gobbled which our commissary found!
How the sweet potatoes even started from the ground,
While we were marching through Georgia.

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Yes, and there were Union men who wept with joyful tears,
When they saw the honor'd flag they had not seen for years;
Hardly could they be restrained from breaking forth in cheers,
While we were marching through Georgia.

"Sherman's dashing Yankee boys will never reach the coast!"
So the saucy rebels said, and 't was a handsome boast,
Had they not forgot, alas! to reckon with the host,
While we were marching through Georgia.

So we made a thoroughfare for Freedom and her train,
Sixty miles in latitude – three hundred to the main;
Treason fled before us, for resistance was in vain,
While we were marching through Georgia.

Henry Clay Work was self-taught. George F. Root, who composed "The Battle-Cry of Freedom," "Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching" and "Just before the battle, mother," was a musician of the Lowell Mason type, musically cultivated within the limits of the facilities offered by this country in his youth, with a supplement of brief study abroad, but with natural gifts and a rare pedagogic faculty, which caused his labors

in schools and at musical conventions to be of much importance in spreading a knowledge of music. His "Battle-Cry of Freedom" often was ordered to be sung by the soldiers when going into battle. A curious offshoot from it was the adaptation of "Mary had a little lamb" to the tune, the soldiers singing,

Mary had a little lamb,
Its fleece was white as snow;
And everywhere where Mary went,
The lamb was sure to go,
"Shouting the battle-cry of freedom!"

When the Civil War broke out, a young Marylander, named James Ryder Randall, was residing in New Orleans where he was engaged in newspaper work. Shortly afterwards he became professor of English at the small college of Poydras, at Pointe Coupée, on the Fausse Rivière. It was here the news reached him, in April, 1861, that Massachusetts troops had been fired upon while passing through

Baltimore. He had been impatient, chagrined, downcast, at the refusal of his native state to cast its fortunes with the Confederacy, but in this incident he thought he discerned the promise that it would do so. It was the inspiration of this thought which seized upon him about midnight and enabled him to produce at a single sitting what is, next to the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," the finest poem of the Civil War, "Maryland," which, as sung to the air of "Lauriger Horatius" (the German folk-melody, "O Tannenbaum"), was called by Alexander H. Stephens the "Marseillaise of the Confederacy." The following seem to me its most spirited stanzas:

Hark to thy wandering son's appeal,
Maryland!
My mother state! To thee I kneel,
Maryland!
For life and death, for woe and weal,
Thy peerless chivalry reveal,
And gird thy beauteous limbs with steel,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Thou wilt not cower in the dust,
Maryland!
Thy beaming sword shall never rust,
Maryland!
Remember Carroll's sacred trust,
Remember Howard's warlike thrust,
And all thy slumberers with the just,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Thou wilt not yield the Vandal toll,
Maryland!
Thou wilt not crook to his control,
Maryland!
Better the fire upon thee roll,
Better the blade, the shot, the bowl,
Than crucifixion of the soul,
Maryland, my Maryland!

The poem was published in the New Orleans "Delta," and attracted immediate attention. Miss Jennie Cary, of Baltimore, selected the air for the words, and it gained its first vogue as a war song when she sang it at a serenade given to her and her sister Hetty (afterwards the wife of Professor H. Newell Martin, of Johns Hopkins University) by Maryland troops in Beauregard's army at Fairfax Court House, Virginia. The author of the

poem, who was born in Baltimore in 1839, is living in Augusta, Georgia. Among his other poems is the fine hymn "Resurgam."

"If we had had your songs, you never would have beaten us," is the remark said to have been made by a Confederate officer to a Northern one. This may be an exaggerated tribute to the power of song, but it emphasizes what is a fact, namely, that the war songs of the North had considerably more swing and vim to them than those of the South. "Dixie" and, in some essentials, "Maryland" were so unwarlike that they have become almost as popular in the North as they are in the South. But no song of the Civil War, however great its vogue then or since, has developed the capacity of a national anthem. That honor has been accorded to "The Star-Spangled Banner," in the singing of which both sides now happily can join.


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